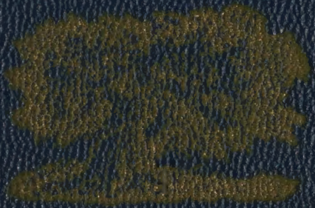

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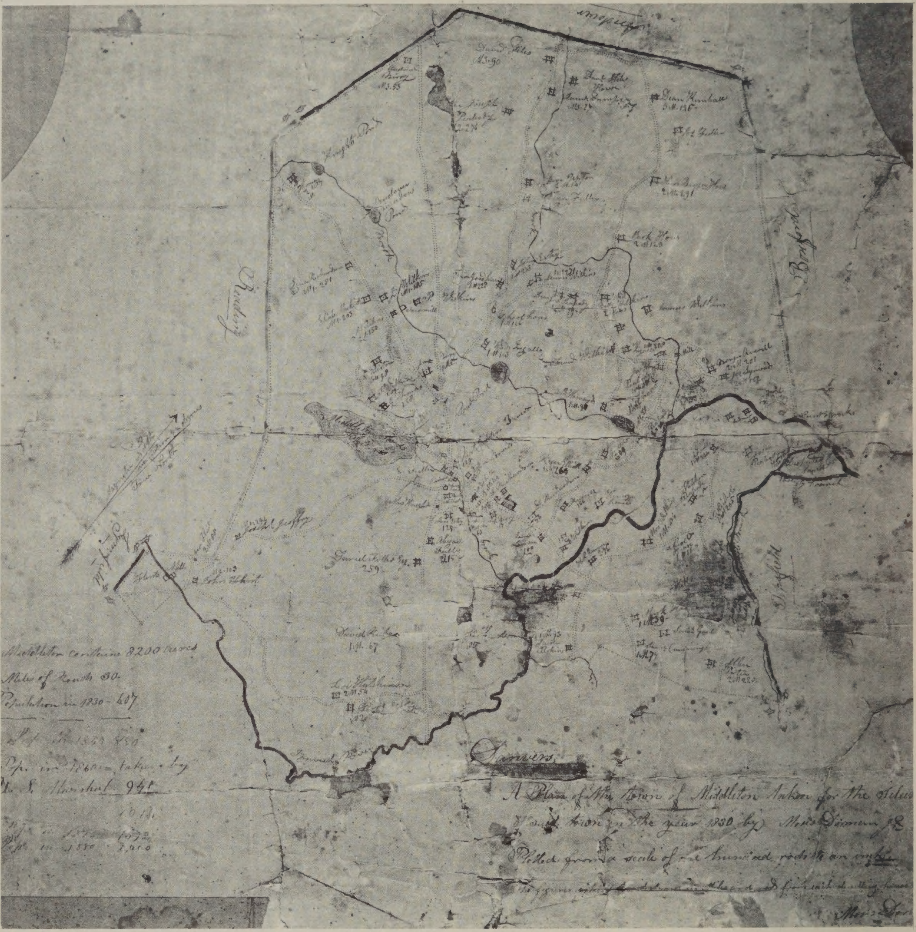
Middleton, Massachusetts

A CULTURAL HISTORY



Reading
Boxford
Topsfield
Danvers
Middleton contains 8200 acres
Miles of Roads 30
Population in 1830 - 607
Pop. in 1860 = taken by
U. S. Marshal 941
A Plan of the town of Middleton taken for the Selec
said town in the year 1830 by Moses Dorman
Plotted from a scale of one hundred rods to an inch

Map surveyed for the selectmen by Moses Dorman in 1830.

By LURA WOODSIDE WATKINS

Middleton, Massachusetts

A CULTURAL HISTORY

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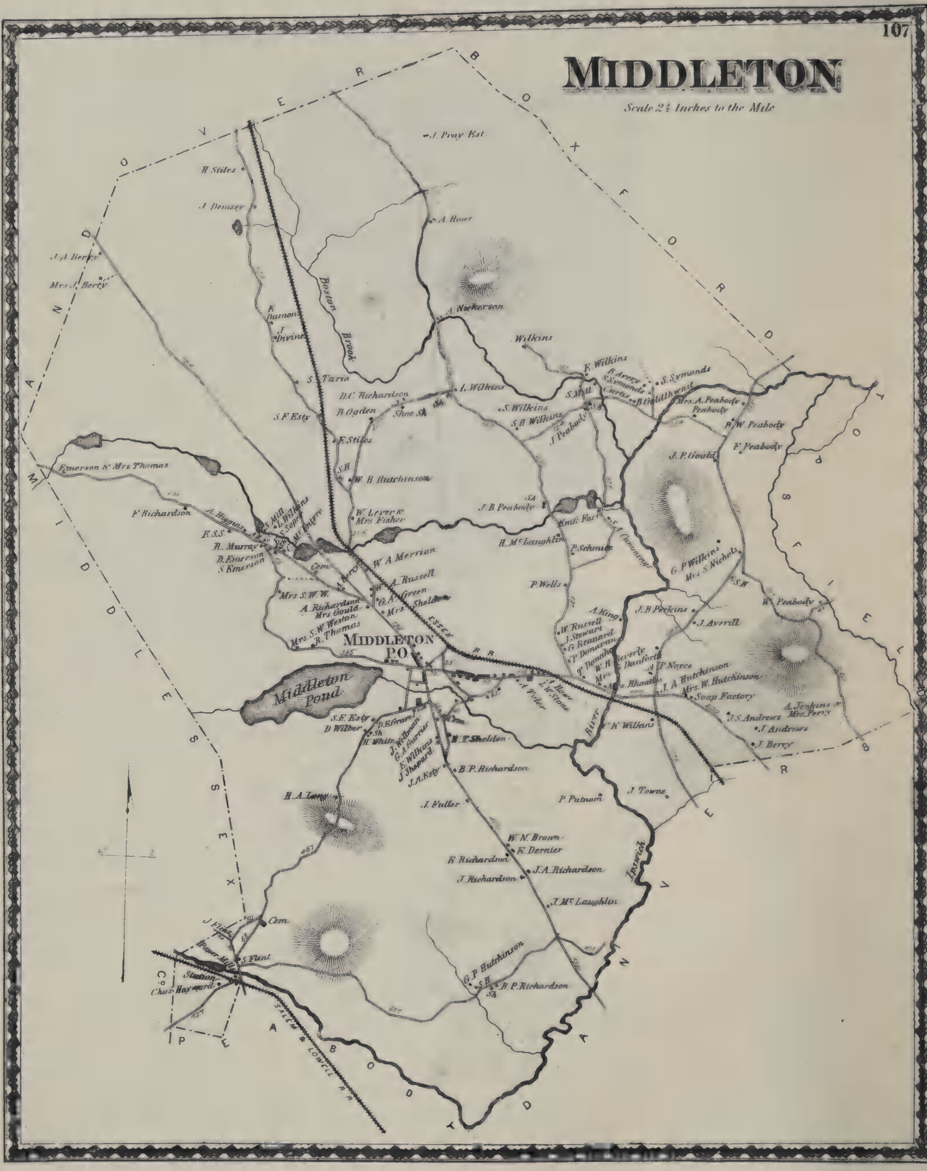
MRS. MARTHA J. (WESTON) AVERILL
WHO SPENT YEARS IN COPYING MIDDLETON'S RECORDS
AND DOCUMENTS AND IN PERPETUATING
LOCAL TRADITIONS

ERRATUM

Where the name Miss Minnie Taylor
appears on pages xii and 291,
please read Miss Marion Tyler.


107
MIDDLETON
Scale 2¼ Inches to the Mile
BOXFORD
TOPSFIELD
DANVERS
PEABODY
LYNNFIELD
MIDDLESEX
NORTH ANDOVER
Boston Brook
Ipswich River
Middleton Pond
MIDDLETON P.O.
ESSEX R.R.
SALEM & LOWELL R.R.
Paper Mills
Station
Cem.
Soap Factory
Shoe Sh.
Knit. Fact.
S.Mill
S.H.

Map from Beers' Atlas of Essex County, Mass, 1872.

Preface

This account is not primarily a political history. It is intended to throw light on the former way of life in a small community: to show how the people carried on their affairs, both public and private, to tell of their trades and crafts, and how they built their houses. I have stressed the descriptions of individual houses in order to show that the inhabitants of so small and obscure a village created on their scattered farms homes that were comparable in size, convenience, and dignity to the greatly admired plantation houses of the south. George Washington himself lived in quarters that were no more commodius.

In gathering the information for this book I have relied principally upon the land and probate records of Essex County, the original town records of Middleton and Salem, on journals and account books in the possession of the Middleton Historical Society, and on the manuscripts and genealogical data compiled by Martha (Weston) Averill of Middleton, which are now owned by the Essex Institute.

Some chapters in this account have already appeared in *Old-Time New England*, the publication of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. They are entitled "Where Was the Indian Bridge?" "The Middleton Ironworks," "The District Schools of Middleton," and "Shoemaking in Middleton." The chapter on watermills was first published by the Institute in its *Historical Collections*. I am indeed grateful for permission to incorporate these articles in the present history.

I am particularly indebted to the librarians of the Essex Institute for their ever-gracious assistance in my search, and for the Institute's loan and gift of materials now in the Middleton Historical Society's files. To Miss Ruth Tyler, more than to any other one person, I owe an especial debt of gratitude for digging out original records to substantiate my findings. Thanks are also due to the Flint Public Library of Middleton and its staff, especially for the loan of photographs. To Harry R. Woodward and the late Bertha (Flint) Woodward I must express my deep appreciation for their loan of the diaries kept by Sylvanus and George B. Flint and for the use of other material and pictures. In fact, this book could not have been written without the cooperation of the residents of Middleton, who have channeled their family records and photographs into my hands by way of the Middleton Historical Society.

Above all, my sincerest thanks go to those who have made possible the publication of this history. Included among those who have rendered this kind of assistance are James J. Storrow, Jr., who has acted as a chairman, R. Lionel Barrows, the Misses Lillian and Helen Richardson, Mr. and Mrs. George W. Smith and the Creighton Family Foundation. Above all I must mention David B. Little, who has been the guiding spirit in accomplishing the project.

At this point I would like to explain a system of notation which is all my own. Whenever I have referred to volume and page of land records on file in the Essex County Registry of Deeds, I have inserted the numbers in parentheses directly in the text instead of in footnotes. The numbers of wills in the Essex probate records are inserted in the text in similar fashion. Data from other registries or probate courts are noted more specifically.

Lura Woodside Watkins

Contents

Dedication v

Preface vii

List of Illustrations xi

PART I The People and Their Occupations xiii

Chapter I First Settlers of Middleton 15

Chapter II Roads and Bridges 35

Chapter III Water Mills of Middleton 49

Chapter IV The Ironworks 83

Chapter V The Blacksmiths 91

Chapter VI Textile Working in Middleton 105

Chapter VII Shoemaking 115

Chapter VIII Some Other Industries 131

Chapter IX Slaves in Middleton 145

PART II The Old Houses of Middleton 151

Chapter X The Old Houses of Middleton 153

PART III The Town 237

Chapter XI Early Town Government 239

Chapter XII Military History 245

Chapter XIII Middleton's Churches 255

Chapter XIV The District Schoolhouses 279

Chapter XV The Growth of the Libraries 295

Chapter XVI Town Properties 303

Chapter XVII Public Transportation 321

Index 329

Illustrations

An 1830 Plan of Middleton
Map of Middleton vi
Mrs. Martha S. Weston) Averill v
The John Nichols House, 1860 21
"Fuller's Great Rock" 26
Old Kenney House 28
Home of Samuel Howe Wilkins 31
Home of the Symonds Family 32
The Stone at Indian Bridge 36
Stone Culvert on Mount Vernon Street 44
Middleton Square in 1905 47
House built by Dr. Silas Meriam 52
Great Dam over Ten Load Meadow Brook 57
Sawmill off Forest Street 60
Nathaniel Peabody House 70
400 year old Oak tree and Curtis house 73
Sluiceway of Middleton ironworks 84
Mr. and Mrs. David Stiles 95
Home and shops of David Stiles 99
The Stiles blacksmith shop 100
Interior of Stiles blacksmith shop 101
Shoe Shop of John Curtis 114
First house on Maple Street west of Church 119
Type of small house near center 119
Francis P. Merriam 122
F. P. Merriam shoe factory 123
The Merriam factory in the 1890's 128
Paper Mill, South Middleton 130
Sylvanus Flint 135
J. B. Thomas box factory 141
House on Old South Main Street 155
House built by Jonathan Fuller 157
Jacob Fuller House 160
Joseph Fuller House 164
Capt. Andrew Fuller House 168
House built by Andrew Fuller 169
West bedroom, Captain Andrew Fuller House 172
Col. Archelaus Fuller House 176

Bray Wilkins farmhouse 182
House of Deacon Edward Putnam, Jr. 188
View of the Edwin Putnam farm 193
Timothy Perkins House 195
Old Ebenezer Stiles Homestead 201
Homestead of Col. Benjamin Peabody 207
Peabody-Wilkins House 212
Home of the Flint family 217
Home of Lieut. John Flint 221
Abigail Bradstreet House 224
Estey Tavern in Middleton Square 230
Old Town Ballot Box 242
Diagram of the church 254
Middleton Congregational Church 260
Maple Street looking east, c. 1850 264
Middleton Congregational Church 267
Universalist Church 271
Methodist Church 274
St. Agnes Church 276
North School, Essex Street 282
East District School 284
Centre School, 1860 287
Centre Grammar School 291
Miss Minnie Taylor and her class 291
House on site of Flint Public Library 296
Caroline A. Stiles (Fletcher) 298
Samuel A. Fletcher 299
Town Hall, 1895 307
The Tramp House 307
Pumping Station 311
Bronze fire bell 314
Post Office 316
Miss Fannie Flint 317
Howe Station 320
Middleton Station 323
North Main Street in 1902 325
Cutting through ledges for street car tracks 327
Convertible street car 327

PART I

The People and Their Occupations

CHAPTER I

First Settlers of Middleton

WILL'S HILL, SALEM VILLAGE

The greater part of what is now Middleton originally belonged to Salem, or Salem Village, as the northern part of it was called. The section was also known as the "farmes" and its inhabitants were called the farmers, but the village that later became Middleton was given the name "Will's Hill." Will was an old Indian who lived and died near the great hill north of Middleton Pond, and who raised corn and vegetables on the meadow below.

The agreeable surroundings, with good fresh water, high dry land, and a plantation already started, were the attractions that brought the first settlers to this region. Bray Wilkins, who had formerly lived in Dorchester and then in Lynn, together with a friend, John Gingell, also from Dorchester, purchased a seven-hundred-acre farm of Richard Bellingham, who was later governor of the province, on March 9, 1659 (2-1). They paid twenty-five pounds outright for the land (twenty-four in bar iron and one pound in cash) and promised to make payment of one hundred pounds more the following year. As they were hoping to find iron deposits, they made an additional agreement in the spring of 1660 (2-4) by which, in case they should find "mines or minerals", that would bring them a revenue of one hundred pounds a year, they would pay Bellingham ten pounds per annum.

When these arrangements had been made and recorded, the Wilkins family moved to Will's Hill. Bray Wilkins had six sons and two daughters, the older ones approaching marriageable age, while Gingell was a single man and always remained so. It is thought that Mrs. Bray Wilkins was his sister. The settlement was therefore very much of a family affair. Both men built houses side by side north of the pond. Gingell's was probably a small one, as it was listed in the Salem commoners' records as a cottage right.

Wilkins and Gingell got into some serious difficulties and court proceedings because they were unable to or did not make the payments as agreed. March 4, 1664, Simon Bradstreet brought a suit[1] against Bray Wilkins and his sons Samuel and John "For carrying away a parcel of hay." This sounds like a trifling matter, but actually at the time it was a serious one. Richard Barker and George Abbott, Sr., testified that Barker had also lost hay. He told how they had followed the tracks of a laden cart from Mr. Bradstreet's rick and had traced them into Wilkins's field and to his house, knowing that no cart could go beyond the frozen river at that season. Thomas Abbott swore that about three loads of hay that he had helped Bradstreet get at "Beechin" meadow were taken away and that Bradstreet had been obliged to buy hay at high cost, that time was lost, and that a pair of oxen were unable to work for two months for lack of proper nourishment.

Another deponent was a young man, John Longley, who lived with Bray Wilkins. He said that Bray told him George Corwin had left a load of hay for him in Andover Meadow, and that Bray and his sons and Gingell brought it home.

Bray's answer to all this was that he did not steal the hay, but took it because it would have been burned or spoiled had he not done so. The trial ended in a split decision and Bray was released.

More serious was a suit brought by Richard Bellingham[2] in June 1666, charging that Wilkins and Gingell were "injuriously and forcibly holding possession of a farm many years after it was legally forfeited." Although the occupants of the farm had made only one partial payment, Bellingham was willing to apply this to the third of the property which they had improved and built upon. Another charge was brought. "For cutting down and ruining the principal timber and great trees in the farm and land mortgaged at or near Will's hill." By his own admission Bray Wilkins had in the past winter felled trees and made from off the farm 6000 barrel staves, which he sold to Mr. Corwin, and by the testimony of Philip Knight and his son Jonathan, he had cut about 20,000 white oak barrel staves, besides about 1100 feet of boards, the past winter, and as many as 6000 feet in the previous year. Meanwhile, in the spring, two officers of the law, deputy marshalls, had seized three parcels of cedar shingles near Wilkins's house and two parcels near Gingell's, and found that they were also making bolts and clapboards and other salable commodities.

Nathaniel Putnam, a Salem Village neighbor, had to say in their behalf that Bray Wilkins had been brought to "a meane & Low Condishon" by the burning of his house in January 1664, and that he and other neighbors were willing to contribute something to aid him in his "sad and deplorable Condishon." Gov. Bellingham agreed that the matter should be left to "indifferent men and settled by arbitration."

As a means of improving their situation, the pair, as early as November 28, 1662 (4-90), had sold to Major Denison of Ipswich one hundred acres of land southeast of their farm and thirty acres to the southwest. These tracts were shortly afterwards conveyed to Thomas Fuller, who came to Will's Hill and bought them with other land from Denison the following year.

On March 31, 1673, Bray and his wife Anna and John Gingell sold one-third of the whole plantation to Aaron Waye (Way) and his cousin William Ireland, both of Boston. This sale and agreement covered a third part of the settlement as a whole, including all houses, barns, and other buildings, timber and trees, the swamps, meadows, pastures, and ponds, and all appurtenances. There must have been some unrecorded divisions as to where the newcomers should build.

It was not until 1676 that the Bellingham mortgage was paid off in full. Wilkins then bought out Gingell's interest in the farm. He also acquired 300 acres from Denison, until he finally owned an immense tract running for two miles along the Reading line.

As all of Wilkins's sons were born before 1660, they were grown men with families during their father's lifetime. In 1679 Bray Wilkins deeded lands and meadows to his sons Samuel, Thomas, Henry, and Benjamin (John had died in 1673). By this conveyance (9-136) we learn that Thomas had a dwelling house adjoining John Gingell's land and that Benjamin also had a "hows." When Gingell died in 1684/5, his house was still standing, although he had sold out his interest in the plantation. By agreement among the brothers his house and lands — "all that wch was Jno Gingals" - was given to John Wilkins's son John. Gingell had already willed him a lot on the south side of the pond and a piece of meadow at the end of the hill between Gingell's house and the pond September 1, 1693, John and Thomas Wilkins made an exchange of property. By this transfer (9-189) John conveyed to Thomas three and three-quarters acres of "upland & meadow Joyning to Will hill pond and houses or barnes & Orched Trees woods" etc. This was the Gingell property. At this time John probably built the house north of Andover Brook that he left to his son David when he died in 1723/4. This farm descended from father to son through succeeding generations up to modern times.

It has been possible to determine the exact spot where Bray Wilkins built his second and permanent dwelling after the fire of 1664. By his will, dated January 9, 1696/7 (P.R. 29875), he left his "home lot, house, barns, & orchard and appurtenances thereunto belonging" to his son Benjamin, together with land running over the hill to Pout Pond Brook. This was always the homestead land. To Benjamin also he gave a thirty-acre lot at the head of the hill and a lot running over "walnut tree hill so called."

Benjamin, whose will was probated December 29, 1715 (P.R. 29872), bequeathed "all my homestede, with the orchards, buildings, and fences that is thereon," to his son Jonathan. The easterly line ran northwestwardly over the hill to a muddy swamp, thence west to a bound tree of John Easties, and by Easties land to the pond.

Jonathan Wilkins lived until June 1761. He had sons Benjamin, Jonathan, Asa, and Daniel, but he left his land and buildings to be equally divided between Jonathan and Asa (P.R.29908). Asa, who had married Bethiah Richardson in 1757, moved to Jaffrey, New Hampshire. Apparently he made no claim upon the family land, as there is no record of his conveying it by gift or otherwise to his brother, who later was in complete possession of it.

This second Jonathan, known as Jonathan 3d., owned a great deal of property. In 1765 he sold to Elias Smith the old Thomas Fuller house and in 1770 he conveyed the Wilkins grist mill, which he had inherited, to Dr. Silas Meriam. On February 29, 1772, he sold his entire holdings of nearly 260 acres to Elisha Fuller for nearly one thousand pounds (134-182). In this conveyance he specified both land and buildings and particularly "one piece of land called my homestead containing about 100 acres being in Middleton adjoining to Middleton pond."

Elisha Fuller owned the house until his death in 1801, when he left it to his niece Abigail Fuller Kimball. Shortly before this time the state census of properties taken in 1798 gives a hint of what the house may have been like. It was a two-story structure covering 884 square feet of ground, and it had ten windows with only sixty-seven square feet of glass in them. The windows must have been very small. Casement windows were out of date by 1798, but these may have measured two feet by three with six-by-eight-inch panes, and must have been placed two to a room with one in the upper hall. The house was no doubt a typical seventeenth-century dwelling resembling the original Deacon Edward Putnam, Jr., homestead, with two rooms on the lower floor and two upstairs. Its ground plan was slightly larger than that of the Putnam house, but is consistent with rooms eighteen or nineteen feet square.

After Fuller's death a controversy arose on account of his having left his entire estate to his niece, who was then only twenty-three years old. Furthermore, he had made her executor of his will. The matter was taken to court, but Fuller was declared of "sound and disposing mind" and the property went to Abigail Fuller Kimball. She and her daughter Abigail lived with her uncle, Dr. David, until his death in 1821. They sold his house and farm in 1833 and went to live in Peabody, where the daughter married Richard Osborne. After some years, Abigail Kimball came back to Middleton and occupied the old Bray Wilkins house, where she died in 1859. The selectmen's map of 1830, although torn, shows faintly the name Fuller at a point on Lake Street opposite the outlet of the pond. H. F. Walling's 1856 chart of Essex County also notes in the same place the name of Mrs. Fuller (Abigail Kimball was sometimes so called). When Beers' atlas was published in 1872, the house was in the name of A. Osborne. On May 9, 1873 (889-258), Mrs. Osborne sold the 120 acres of the homestead to Stephen Emerson. There is no mention of the house, which had probabily deteriorated or been torn down by that time. Before 1877, Emerson had built a large Victorian mansion which now stands on the site.

It may be argued that there is no proof that the house was the original building. On the other hand, there is no reason why it should not have been. It is not unusual for a house to remain for two hundred years. In fact, at least sixteen dwellings in Middleton of even greater age are still in existence and occupied.

Aaron Way owned a house before 1680 on his part of the plantation. We now know that it was built on the site of the Estey Tavern still standing in Middleton Square. Way's old house was incorporated into the structure of the tavern when it was built in 1753, and parts of it may still be seen. Way does not appear to have lived at Will's Hill. December 6, 1680 (6-1), Aaron Waye, Senr., conveyed his sixth part of the village to his sons Aaron and William to be equally divided between them; Aaron was to have the housing and enclosed home lot where he was then living and William to have land adjoining his house and a piece upon the great neck. Later records show that William's house stood on land east of the present Congregational Church, two acres of it being in Salem and twenty-eight in Boxford.

It is unlikely that William Ireland lived at Will's Hill after 1681, the only year when his name appears in Salem Village church records. His land and house lay east of the Aaron Way home lot. When he and his son's widow Elizabeth and his grandson John sold this homestead to Henry, Benjamin, and John Wilkins, and Thomas Bayley in 1705/6, they were of Boston. Bayley was then in the "tenure and occupation" of the house. He had been in Salem Village and probably at Will's Hill since 1681. His wife Elizabeth was apparently a sister of John Gingell; as Elizabeth Gingell she received a small legacy under his will. Therefore, he was closely tied to the community. In 1684/5 he was a witness to Gingells will. His house and family are described in the section on the Old Bradstreet house.

The Way brothers moved to South Carolina. On October 25, 1698, Aaron sold his dwelling houses, orchards, and sixty acres (14-203) — all his right in the Bellingham farm — to John Eastey of Topsfield for forty-five pounds. William, already living in South Carolina, conveyed his farm (15-249) April 15, 1702, to Josiah White of Salem, a carpenter. White and his mother, and later his son Joseph, a joiner, lived on the place until 1720, when it was sold to Dr. Daniel Felch (38-79). The field in front of this house was the site of Middleton's first town meeting. At the time of the sale, Samuel White, a wheelmaker, probably a brother of Joseph, was building a home nearby, which he sold to Dr. Felch on the same day. He had already put up a barn and had dug a cellar hole for his house.

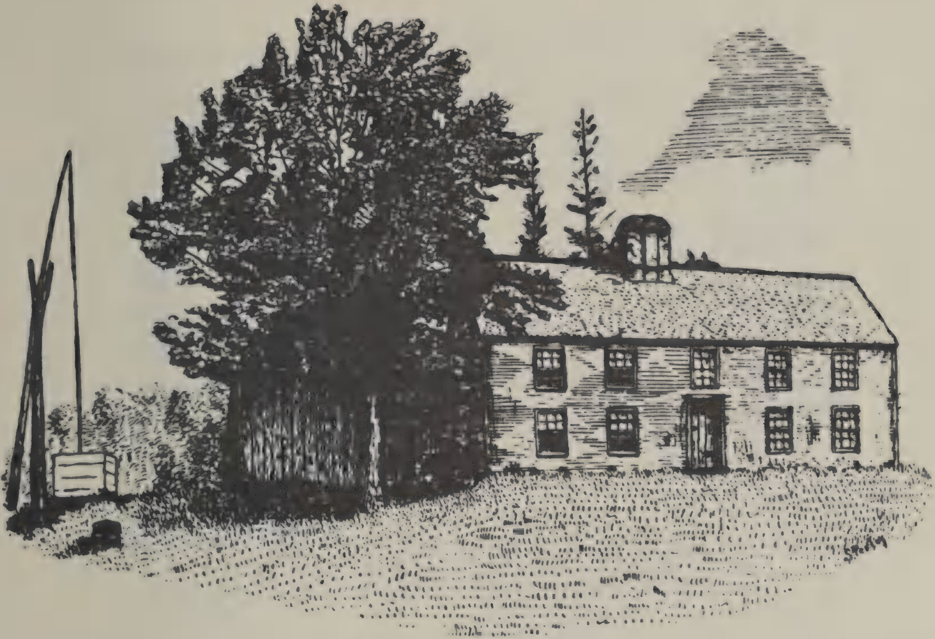
Meanwhile, at the request of Bray Wilkins, it is said, Thomas Fuller of Woburn and his numerous family had come to Will's Hill in 1663. In that year Fuller bought 300 acres of Daniel Denison, which included the land southeast of the Wilkins farm. He was a blacksmith, whose craft was very important during a period of settlement and building, and it is possible that Wilkins and Gingell had hoped that he would be a help in locating iron ore. That did not happen, but Fuller set up a shop, where several of his sons also worked, and built a sawmill on the brook out of the pond.

The Fuller family is so thoroughly covered in the descriptions of their houses, five of which are still standing, that their activities will not be further discussed at this point.

One other early inhabitant of Will's Hill was Philip Mackentire, son of Philip of Reading. He married Henry Wilkins's daughter Rebecca, February 20, 1695. His first child, Ebenezer, was born in Reading, but the family moved to Will's Hill before 1699, when their little girls, Mary and Rebecca, were baptised in the Salem Village church. Their five other children were born in the village before 1717.

Mackentire appears to have moved to Connecticut by 1724, when he sold his property to John Putnam (75-211). Mackentire's land is described as being on the northwest side of Ipswich River and west of the Andover road, bounding on Joseph Hutchinson and Jacob Fuller. It comprised thirty acres, including one acre on the east side of the road "against" (opposite) "said Philip Mackentire's house."

Philip was a brother of Samuel Mackentire, a joiner, of Reading(the ancestor of the famous Samuel Mackentire, carver, of Salem). Two of Samuel's sons married Middleton girls: Phineas married Mary Carroll in 1739 and Benjamin, Experience Elliot, daughter of Francis and Jerusha, in 1750. Both couples lived in Middleton for a time, and in later years



JOHN NICHOLS HOUSE
(Ferncroft)

Built about 1860 by John Nichols, son of William Nichols, the first settler in what is now Middleton. From a cut in *Essex Institute Historical Collections, Vol. LIV (April 1918) P.M.*

still other Mackentires came to Middleton from Reading.

TOPSFIELD

William Nichols was the very first inhabitant of what is now Middleton. In 1651 he bought a tract of land of several hundred acres from Henry Bartholomew of Salem. Nichols himself also came from Salem (West Peabody), where he had been living since 1637. He built his home in the little valley threaded by Nichols Brook. It stood to the right or east of the bridge on what is still known as Copper Mine Road, not far from the present Locust Street.

Nichols had a son, born in 1641, and two daughters, one of whom, Mary, married Thomas Cave, and the other, Hannah, Thomas Wilkins. Nichols disposed of his lands during his lifetime. On January 4, 1678/9 (6-115), he gave thirty acres on the northwestern end of his property to his adopted son and apprentice, Isaac Burton, who was very dear to him. Burton built a dwelling house and always lived there. In 1897 the cellar hole could still be seen about 650 feet west of Ferncroft Inn.[3]

William Nichols gave the remainder of his land to his son John (5-56), retaining for himself the house where he had been living. In 1680 John built the substantial mansion remembered by local residents, which was opened to the public in 1892 under the name of Ferncroft Inn. John Nichols lived there and raised a family of ten children. Four years before his death in 1700, he deeded the homestead to his son John. Several other generations of the family succeeded to the place and it then passed through various hands. The house was destroyed by fire January 17, 1911.

North of the land owned by Isaac Burton was a farm that bordered on William Hobbs to the west and John Nichols on the east. It belonged to one John Robinson, who had bought forty acres there from John Porter in 1671. Robinson made his home in Topsfield village and did not live on this land, but his son Thomas did. Thomas married Hannah Dorman, November 20, 1695, and the couple had six children born between 1696 and 1706. They were still living there in 1716 and later, when Thomas was given several different common lands by the town of Topsfield.

Northwest of the Burton farm was the home of another very early settler, William Hobbs. In 1660 this land was owned by Thomas Putnam, but Hobbs acquired it and in 1668 was living in his house there. By his will he gave this farm to his grandson William Hobbs, who continued to occupy the family home until about 1743, when he removed to Souhegan West (Amherst), New Hampshire. The Hobbs house is said to have been gone by that time: it may have been burned. A cellar hole on the east side of Locust Street not far from its junction with East

Street is thought to be the site of the Hobbs house. The first William Hobbs and his family attended the Salem Village church and became involved in the witchcraft persecutions. He and his wife Deliverance and his daughter Abigail were accused of witchcraft and brought to trial, but were not executed.

On the south side of the hill where the Essex County Sanatorium has been so pleasantly located, a tract of 100 acres of land lying partly in Salem and partly in Topsfield was early owned by John Ruck and sold by him to Thomas Cave and Philip Knight about 1673. Both of them built substantial houses on this land, where they and their descendants lived for more than one hundred years. Cave had married Mary Nichols, daughter of John, and, perhaps as a short cut to her father's home on the hill, a cartway was made leading up to it. In the other direction the road cut through Philip Knight's land and went west to the "River Bridge" (the present Maple Street). Thomas Cave held such positions as constable and highway surveyor in Topsfield and seems to have prospered. His six children were Sarah, born March 8, 1673; Hannah, March 14, 1675/6; Abigail, March 28, 1677/8; Thomas and Rebecka, twins, March 6, 1680/1; and Anne, July 9, 1682.

When Cave died in 1708, he left his house, barn, and lands to his only son, Thomas, with the proviso that his widow was to have "that end of the house that John Putnam built." The younger Thomas was a very active and successful man with a hand in many undertakings. He was one of the founders of the ironworks on Pout Pond Brook in Boxford, later Middleton. When the works was sold by him in 1760, he was its sole owner. At that time he paid a higher tax than anyone in Middleton. Throughout his lifetime he continued to occupy the house his father had built. The mansion then went to a third Thomas, and after him, to his son Amos. The farm then contained 100 acres besides numerous other tracts of land. Amos Cave removed the old original house in 1804.

Philip Knight was the son of Philip Knight of Salem and his wife Mary. He was born in 1645 and was therefore twenty-three years of age when his father died in 1668.[4] He must have married shortly after his father's death, as his first child was born in 1669. It is possible that he was living on the Ruck land before various agreements with Ruck and Thomas Cave were concluded. The date 1673 seems to mark the settlement of these provisions. There is no deed to the purchase of the land in the Essex County Registry of Deeds. It may be assumed, however, that by 1673 Philip Knight had already built the house where he lived for the rest of his days. His wife was the former Margaret Wilkins, a daughter of Bray of Will's Hill, whose birth is recorded in Dorchester in 1648. Their children were Philip, 1669; Margaret, 1671; Abigail, 1672/3; Margery, 1674; Elizabeth, 1676; Mary, 1680; Joseph, 1684/5; and Benjamin, bp. August 21, 1692. These young people, with Rebecca Knight, who may have been another daughter, were baptised in the Topsfield church on May 24, 1691, when the oldest was twenty-two years old and Benjamin still unborn.

Little is known of the personal history of Philip Knight, but the wording of a deed of gift to his son seems to indicate a loving and considerate man. To mark the marriage of young Philip to Rebecca Towne he built a house for him near his own home and prepared for his comfortable beginning as a farmer. In the words of the deed, which is dated November 4, 1692 (36-156),

> "Upon the Contract of Marrig of my son Philip Knight with Rebekah Towne of Topsfield daughter to the widow Mary Towne, have & hereby doe give grant (etc.) to my son Philip Knight one house and half my Barne & fifteen acres of Upland adjoyning to the said house & Barne lying Westward from my own Dwelling House & the house of my son Philip and also six acres of Clear Meadow one the West side of Ipswich River and as much more Swampy Meadow as he shall see good to Clear together with half my neer Orchard that Lyes Eastwardly of my house & one yoke of oxen & the use of my Carts plows & Chains & any of my husbandry tackelings for his Nessary use untill he Can provde Such husbandry tackelings for himself."

In the following year the young couple had a little daughter "Rebeckah", born August 21, 1693. A second girl, Elizabeth, came to them before July 5, 1696, when she was duly baptised. It is sad to record that the young husband, who had so much to live for, was taken by death on August 19, 1696. His brothers Joseph and Benjamin were still children, and, as the others were girls, there was no one to take over the farm during the lifetime of Philip Knight, Sr. His death must have occurred between 1722, when he made a gift of common land to his sons, and May 6, 1725, when Elizabeth, the unmarried daughter of Philip, Jr., signed over her rights in the estate to her uncles Joseph and Benjamin (45-160). In a later division of their lands, Benjamin reecived the house built for Philip, Jr., and it remained in the family until sold by Benjamin's son Jonathan in 1796. The Knights, in fact, lived in this part of Middleton for at least a century and a half.

BOXFORD

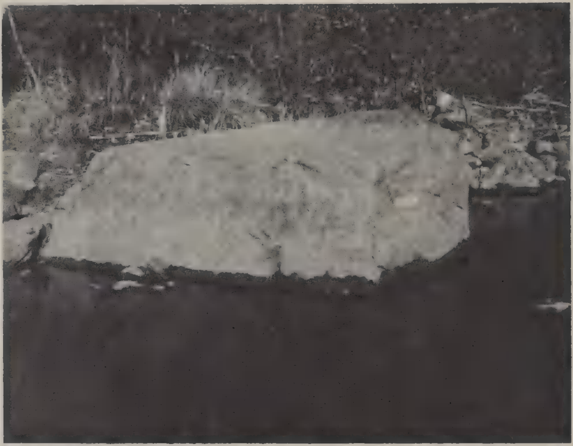
The section of Middleton that was originally Boxford was a strip not much more than a mile wide that was bounded on the east by the Ipswich

River and on the west by a line agreed upon by Boxford and Salem in 1696. This boundary began at its southernmost point at a hornbeam tree on the west bank of the river about one-half mile south of the present Maple Street bridge. It extended northwest on a course that took it back of the present Congregational Church and then north to Pout Pond and thence to a great rock in Boston Brook near what is now Munday Bridge on Liberty Street. West of this line was the Denison grant deeded to Thomas Fuller, whose land was bounded by the same rock that marked the Boxford line.

The early settlers who lived in this Boxford area have been strangely neglected by historians, although some of the most industrious and prosperous of the townspeople lived there in what was virtually a village of their own. Francis Elliot's house is the first one noted in this part of Boxford. As early as 1691 in a division of 500 acres of land that had been "purchased and for a while held in partnership between Francis Eliot and John Nicholls Junr and Thomas Nicholls, both of Topsfield," 'Eliot's house is mentioned. It stood north of the road to Will's Hill and east of William Way's bounds. Today we would place it somewhat northwest of the corner of Maple and Liberty Streets. In 1700 a road to Boxford Village was laid out with Elliot's house as a starting point, running up Andover Road, as it was called thus early, and following the "mill path," now Mill Street. This first dwelling was owned by Eliot's descendants for three generations.

The Peabody family was probably established on Mill Street near Boston Brook as early as the 1690's. Joseph Peabody of Boxford, a wheelwright, had bought two tracts of land there in May 1693/4. He continued to live in the village, but his son Joseph, who was a carpenter, seems to have settled on this land soon afterwards. In March 1693/4 he had 'married Mary Symonds, daughter of Samuel Symonds of Boxford. It was Joseph who built the mill, which, as indicated by the term "mill path", was there before 1700. He did not have title to the land until his father gave it to him "for love" on May 9, 1712/13. Joseph, Jr., died in 1714, leaving six children. Somehow the family managed to keep the mill in operation; it was referred to in a Middleton town record as the "Peabody mill" in 1729. Further details about this enterprise will be found in the chapter "Watermills of Middleton."

Since Peabody records are somewhat scanty and confused, it may be useful to note the births of Joseph's children: Samuel, July 6, 1694; Joseph, January 30, 1696; Mary, 1697; Hannah, 1703; Rebecca, baptised December 2, 1705; Zerubabel, February 26, 1707; Nathaniel, October 7, 1710; and Bethiah, born after the death of her father and baptised January 1714/15.



"Fuller's Great Rock" in Boston Brook on the Salem-Boxford line as it appeared in drought of 1964.

One of the first settlers to become a neighbor of Francis Eliot was Ephraim Shelden. He was the son of William Shelden, an inhabitant of Salem Village and a member of the church there as early as 1689. In 1692 Ephraim was the owner of two pieces of land within the bounds of the village, but he moved to Boxford immediately after his marriage to Jane (Gean) Peart of Lynn on April 30, 1694. According to Boxford records they had a son born January 13, 1694. (This date is probably an error). The next child, Rebecca, came along May 20, 1697, and a boy named after his father, June 15, 1699. Three others were born in 1701, 1703, and 1705.

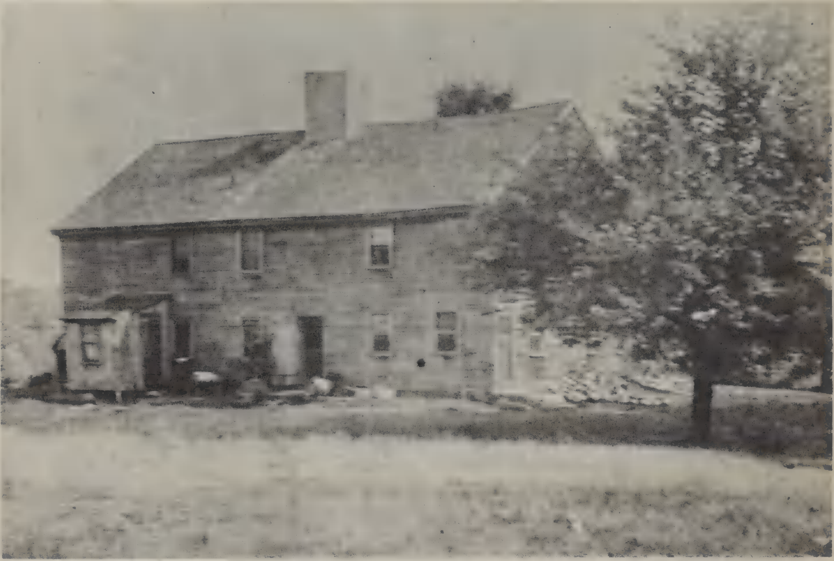
Shelden settled on land along the west bank of the Ipswich River. In 1704 he abutted on Daniel Kenney, a bricklayer, who had purchased five acres from Thomas Nichols in that year. Kenney later made several other purchases, one on July 20, 1707, of nine acres from Ephraim Shelden, who was already beginning to dispose of his property. On October 26, 1708 (20-193), Shelden sold his house, barn, orchards and other trees, with forty acres of land to Kenney's brother Jonathan, a weaver. It is difficult to determine the exact boundaries of these lots, as trees and stones were the only markers. It may be noted, however, that Nathaniel Carrell's property lay south of them.

Since Jonathan Kenney sold this same farm to his brother Daniel in November 1720, the question may well arise as to whether it could have been the old house on Kenney Road known to have been owned in early days by the Kenney family and later called the King place. This, too, bordered on the river.

Before this purchase, Daniel Kenney had undoubtedly built a house on his land, for he and his wife, the former Mary Richards, had nine children born in the area, between 1705 and 1715. There is a cellar hole on Kenney Road between the King place and Liberty Street, which could be the remains of his first home. His son Isaac, and after him, Isaac's sons Asa and Simeon, lived in the Kenney or King house. All were blacksmiths, and Isaac was the bloomer and eventual owner of the ironworks on Mill Street.

Nathaniel Carrell bought land in this southernmost part of Boxford at about the time when Daniel Kenney became a householder there. He, too, acquired land from Thomas Nichols, paying forty pounds for some fifty acres. The deed, dated June 23, 1705 (18-86), reads:

"Thomas Nicholls of Salem to Nathaniel Carrell of Same Towne" and the boundaries of his purchase were thus expressed: "att the South-east Corner by a small brooke where it runns into thhe River Meadow and so up the said Brooke joyning to Francis Elliot to an Elm Tree by the



28 Old Kenney House on Kenney Road. Built in early 1700'S.

brookside; then more Westward joyning to said Elliot to a heap of stones on Elliot's Alsoe; Then Northwardly by said Elliot's land to a Black Oak Tree marked and so on the same line to Andover Olde Rode; and than as the road goes to a Black Oak Marked which is Thomas Cave's bound; then Eastward about forty poles joyning to said Cave's Land to a Black Oak Marked and so on the same Line to Daniel Kenney's Line; then southward to another black oak which is Daniel Kenney's bound and then to runne Eastwardly to another black oak by Ephraim Shelden's Land to the River Meadow Side; and so as the upland goes to the bound first mentioned."

No doubt he built a house at once; it is mentioned in a Boxford town record in December 1707 as being near the bridge over the river (Maple Street). Boxford laid out a new highway "from Ipswich River near to the old highway from said river to Andover as near to the hilly ground as can be laid with convenience till it comes to the north side of Nathaniel Carrell's house, and so along to the north corner of Francis Elliot's rail fence." It should be explained that before Maple Street was straightened in 1810, the road from the bridge went north of the house recently owned by Mrs. Rhoda Bewsher, which presumably stands on the approximate site of the Carrell house. There is also mention in another record of Carrell's mowing meadow near the bridge.

Carrell was a member of the Salem Village church as early as 1697, and he continued in its membership after he moved to Boxford. After his death in 1725 his house and land were sold and later came into the possession of John Elliot, a son of Francis.

John Willard, whose name is familiar to all who have read about the witchcraft delusion, is said to have lived on the north side of what is now Peabody Street not far from the corner of Liberty. Samuel Howe Wilkins, who lived on that corner, is quoted by Martha J. Averill as saying that Willard's farm adjoined his land. On March 1, 1689/90 (9-225), Willard had joined three other members of the Wilkins family — Thomas and Henry, Bray's sons, and Philip Knight, his son-in-law — in the purchase of a tract of four or five hundred acres of land from Elizabeth Corwin, widow of Captain George Corwin of Salem. This acreage was for many years known as the Corwin farm, and Willard's house was within its bounds. As Willard was hanged as a witch in 1692, he must have been one of the first to settle in the area. Since he was just setting out in life, his cruel end was doubly tragic. He has been called a grandson of Bray Wilkins; he had perhaps married one of Bray's granddaughters. John Willard is buried in the old cemetery on Peabody Street west of the river near the entrance to the Henry Sawyer place.

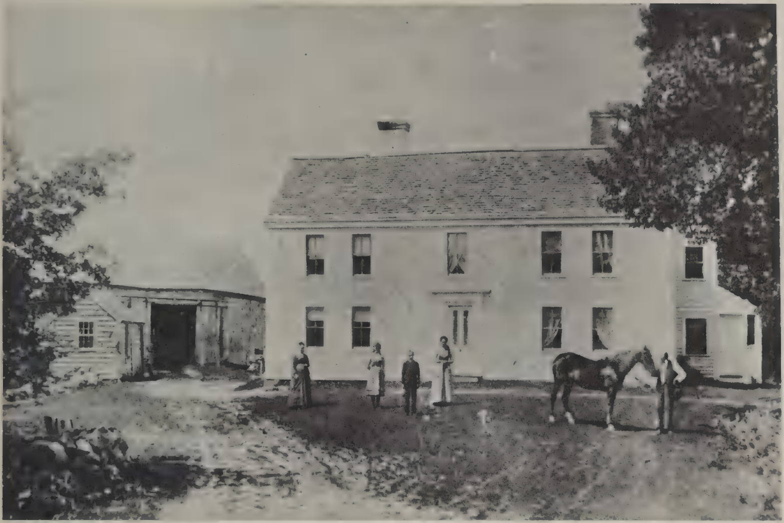
The Wilkins brothers, Thomas and Bray, were probably the next to settle in the vicinity. They were sons of Thomas Wilkins and grandsons of Bray. Thomas married Elizabeth Towne of Topsfield, December 19, 1694, and may have lived in his father's house at Will's Hill for a time, as his first child was born in Salem in 1696. When his daughter Elizabeth came into the world on March 23, 1697, he was living in Boxford and all his other children were born there. At the Boxford town meeting, March 14, 1698/99, he was made a surveyor of highways for the following years. In 1707 he was a selectman.

Thomas Wilkins's house stood on what is now Liberty Street opposite School Street. An old house on this spot owned by his descendants was said by them to be the original structure. It was burned in the 1930's. The late Arthur E. Curtis used to visit the house when it was the home of his great-grandfather Capt. Samuel Wilkins. Mr. Curtis asserted that it was exactly like the house where his grandfather, Samuel Howe Wilkins, lived on the corner of Peabody Street. Although the two houses were built in different periods, the resemblance between them was probably due to the fact that each of them had a room without windows in the center of the building. Mr. Curtis's grandfather slept in one of these airless chambers and lived to be nearly one hundred years old! These blind rooms were merely the spaces once occupied by central chimneys that were removed. Early deeds show that both dwellings were of that type and the Thomas Wilkins house was a saltbox as well.

The Thomas Wilkins farm always remained in the family, standing on a tract of one hundred acres given to him and his brother Bray by their father in 1703. The land extended east and north along Beech Brook and included pasture land west of the house, with numerous other pieces of meadow and woodland. The estate descended to a son Thomas and then to his sons Thomas and Samuel. The third Thomas relinquished his rights, and his brother, known as Samuel 2d, became sole owner of the homestead, which later passed into the hands of his heirs.

Bray Wilkins settled on his part of the one hundred acres about the time of his marriage to Rebecca Knight on February 10, 1701/2, and his first child was born in Boxford the next year. Bray had eleven children, the last, Ichabod, born in 1720. By all indications his home was the ancient saltbox now owned by George W. Smith that stands at the extreme end of Mill Street. The land records are discussed in detail in the section on Middleton's early houses.

A number of other settlers had arrived in this southern part of Boxford before 1705. Cellar holes on North Liberty Street still mark the home sites of two of them. John Howe, Jr., son of Captain John Howe of Ipswich, had married Sarah Cave of Topsfield September 27, 1697, and they



Home of Samuel Howe Wilkins, corner of Liberty and Peabody Streets.
Built by Asa Elliott before 1750.

Home of the Symonds family on Peabody Street. Built by Joseph Symonds in 1792.

joined the church there. Their six children, however, were all born in the part of Boxford that was later Middleton. Since the first arrival in the family, Mark, was born April 18, 1701, we may assume that the Howes were established in their home thus early. A family cellar hole is on the east side of Liberty Street on land now owned by Hazen M. Richardson. It indicates a good-sized house, with a fine well north of it. This house was still occupied by a descendant, Erskine Howe, as late as 1910, but burned to the ground a few years later.

To the north of the Howe place on the same side of the road and close to it, where an old road crosses, there is another well-defined foundation of what must have been a large dwelling. This was built by Thomas Curtis, formerly of Topsfield. The records say that he married Phebe Gould October 16, 1706, and removed to Andover. Actually this site was in Andover until the town line was moved in 1728, but since much of Curtis's land was in Boxford, he is properly included among this Boxford group of early settlers. The births of his children are all entered in Topsfield church records, as the Curtis family continued to attend church there. The abandoned site is picturesque and intriguing. The land back of the house looks as if it had been a yard and garden. Not far from the cellar hole there is a beautifully built well of very narrow dimensions. This type of construction appears here and there in Middleton, notably at the Flint homestead, where an early narrow well is still in use.

Samuel Symonds, Jr., whose namesakes owned his farm for several generations, lived in what is now Middleton as early as 1702. Son of Samuel and Elizabeth (Andrews), he was born in Boxford August 6, 1672. In 1701/2 he and his first wife were among the earlier members of the church established in Rowley Village, as Boxford was then called, but he was then living in a house northwest of the Ipswich River on the site of the one now owned by Henry Sawyer. This is mentioned in a Boxford town record of November 25, 1702, concerning a new road that was to be laid out from Timothy Dorman's land on the Topsfield road, all the way south across a swamp and causeway "to the house of Samuel Symonds, Junr." This road was finally abandoned, but a good part of it is still in existence. Deacon Symonds had three wives and more than a dozen children. He and his descendants later became prominent in Middleton affairs.

CHAPTER I NOTES

1. *Quarterly Court Records of Essex County,* III, 46.
2. *Quarterly Court Records of Essex County,* III, 322.
3. Dr. Andrew Nichols, "Old Nichols Homestead, Now Ferncroft Inn," *The Essex Antiquarian,* I, No. 4, 53.

4. Administration of the estate was granted to the widow in 1668. *Quarterly Court Records of Essex County*, IV, 75.
5. Martha J. Averill, *Genealogical Note Books,* in Essex Institute.

CHAPTER II

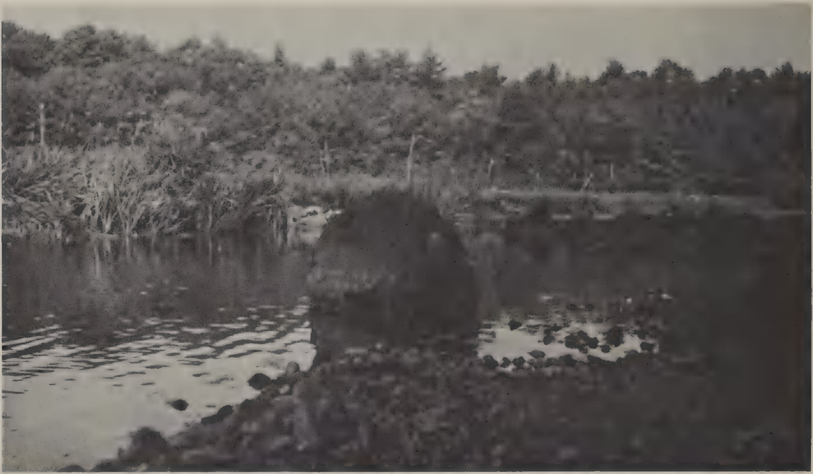
Roads and Bridges

When Thomas Fuller the blacksmith came to Middleton from Woburn in 1664 and settled on the 300 acres he had bought from Major Daniel Denison, the traveled ways were little better than horse paths. As early as 1667, even before he was admitted as an inhabitant of Salem, Fuller was made supervisor of the town's highway work. Thus early he was engaged to build a cartway over Beech Brook on his own land and on the way to Andover — now the site of Munday bridge on Liberty Street. Five years later he was appointed superintendent of the highways of Salem Village.

The principal need at that time was for cart roads between Andover and Salem so that the farmers might get their produce to market. There was also a demand for a better way from Will's Hill to the village church in what is now Danvers Center.

The earliest way from Salem to Andover followed an old Indian trail that led from the village church west and north and crossed the Ipswich River at a point known as the "Indian Bridge."[1] This was about one-quarter mile upstream from the present Maple Street bridge and was marked by a large rock in the river at the end of a division wall between the lands of Edward Putnam, Jr., and his brother Ezra. This rock and wall are still there. Although called the Indian Bridge in the 1600's, it was actually nothing more than a ford. The Indians did not build bridges, except perhaps by throwing a log over a stream. From this crossing the trail went north on Liberty Street or some parallel path and so by a devious route to Andover. At best it was but a rough and rocky road. I shall return to it presently.

The alternate way to Andover from Salem Village went by way of the "Log Bridge" over the Ipswich River (not far east of the bridge on Route



Stone lying in Ipswich River at the place called the "Indian Bridge." About one quarter mile above Maple Street, near a wall which divided the lands of Edward and Ezra Putnam in 1718-19.

114) and so north through Will's Hill somewhat as the numbered highway goes today. As early as 1667 Salem was discussing the matter of building a new road and bridge along this route. In the following summer the Salem selectmen ordered that the Andover highway should be repaired, especially at the bridge, and that Thomas Fuller, Sr., Thomas Small, Nathaniel Putnam, John Putnam, and Bray Wilkins be appointed to see that the work was done. In 1671 the bridge had still not been built, and Salem petitioned the General Court for permission to lay out the "now way" which they had found, describing their difficulties as follows:[2]

> These may inform your Honers that their hath been for some years A Country Highway Laying out between Salem and Andover the which of late is Layd out and we cannot but Judge very unequall with Respect to the Town of Salem and prejudiall to the Countrey, and we have long thought and spok with our neighbors of Andevour about finding a better way, but by Reason of Unseasonable Rains this last two Summers have been prevented of what we Intended and since by the Court of Salem, the town has been fined five pounds and is like to be fined five or ten pounds more Although we have now found a way by much shorter and so much better that will not cost a fourth part of the charge to mak it passable, as the way that was first layd out, having as we Consider about a hundred rodd of meadow & Swamp in not much more than two myles & some of it very deep.

Although Thomas Fuller and others improved the southern part of this road and the log bridge in the 1670's, complaints were continuous about the difficulty of travel. The town was slow to act. At a selectmen's meeting, July 11, 1684, a disinterested committee, not from Will's Hill, was "desired to view & measure both the wayes between Salem & Andiover & make Report thereof unto the Selectmen who shall be pd for their paynes." Whatever their report, it produced results. At the meeting held on September 1, 1684, it was recorded:[3]

> Then agred with Sarj. Thomas ffuler in behafe of the Towne of Salem for to make & maintaine a Sufficient high way from the House of Thomas fuller Junr home to Andover line according to the order of the County court both for cart & foot for & during the full Space of Seaven yeares & fully to finish the Said way fit for servis this Insuing winter & the said fuller doth frely Allow to the Towne of Salem what ever meadow or land shall be made use of for the Said high way as farr as it runs through his land & it is further agred to & with the Said Tho: ffuler Senr that for

& in consideration of the aforesaid high way so made & maintained & the other premises he shall be paid by the Towne of Salem the full & Just Sume of twenty pounds in the Currant Rate of pay only his Sons rates to be of set for this yeare in part of pay as they are made & the pay to be paid him when the work is done — (Fuller to keep the highway in repair.)

The house of Thomas Fuller, Jr., here mentioned is still standing and is now owned by Raymond H. Currier. It faces "Old South Main Street" not far south of Middleton Square. The road from Salem Village had already been laid out to this point and was now to be carried north to the Andover line, which until 1728 was above, but "near", Joseph Fuller's dwelling house on Essex Street (39-251). The record of the October meeting of the Salem selectmen ordered that the road laid out at Will's Hill leading to Andover should go over John Gingell's meadow, where there was then a bridge, and that he should be compensated for any damage done by the building of a causeway. This was where the road went over Pout Pond Brook (now Essex Street). The good men of Will's Hill little knew that this causeway was but the beginning of a two-hundred-year headache that was never even partially relieved until in 1750 one Asa Foster of Andover undertook to make it passable and to keep it in repair for twenty years — all for the meager sum of twenty pounds. The deficiencies of the causeway were not occasioned by poor workmanship, but simply by the fact that the road was built on quicksands. In later years the Essex Railroad had the same problem when a piece of track sank into the ground almost over night. For many years travelers on this road had to bypass the "long casway" by going way up around Forest Street or by turning east in an even more roundabout detour.

Both the Fullers were engaged in this construction, as Thomas, Jr. (Lieut.), was appointed "an overseer of the highway from his house to Andover bounds." The work was completed in 1688, and Thomas Flint, who was then overseer, presented his bill on October fourth. Nearly all the workmen mentioned were from Will's Hill: Lt. Fuller, Jnth Walcot, Jno Buxton, Thomas Wilkins, Benjamin Hutchinson, Wm Way, Henry Wilkins, Jno Willard (he who was later hanged as a witch), James Smith, Jno Hutchinson, Jacob Fuller, Thomas Fuller, Wm. Sibley, Benjamin Fuller, Wm Allen."

There was great dissatisfaction in Andover with the new road. The town made petition as follows to the County Court on June 26, 1688:[5] That whereas ye law of ye Country shows us the nearest and best way to every town and we being att present destitute of a way to Salem which is the nearest Market Towne, there having been a way formerly layd out by Wills Hill but again altered by a Committee to the great damage and inconvenience of the inhabitants of Andover: it being almost impossible with a cart (which instrument inland Towns must make use of for Transportation) and the former way being both nearer (as we have proved by measure) & far better and little charge in making of it good: Each ptickler of which Capt. Osgood, (whome we have appointed to attend this Honered Court in the prosecution of sd way) will further make appear our humble request to this Hond Court is that the sd old way may be settled & started that the Honors' humble petitioners may not be burthened any longer with such rocky impassable ways as indanger the lives & limbs of o'selves & beasts.

More work was done on the highway in that very year and again and again in the years to come. On February 3, 1746, the Middleton town meeting chose Timothy Fuller and Francis Peabody "to get a Committy to Discontinue the Road that comes from andover to Salem over the Longe Casseway in Middleton and to lay out a Road sum other way for the andover People to go to Salem." Timothy Fuller was commissioned May 20, 1746, to present a petition to the General Court "to git the Long Caseway & the bridge there in Middleton to be a County Road & Chearge." Meantime the town took money from its own treasury to pay for timber to rebuild the bridge at the causeway.

In 1755 the town was fined by the county for not keeping the causeway in repair and belatedly they appropriated forty pounds for the purpose. In 1782, after a futile petition to the General Court, the people were taxed eighty pounds for raising the causeway. This unhappy state of affairs kept on year after year, either from inability to cure it or for lack of funds. Rev. William Bentley, writing on July 13, 1804, made the following comment: "Subscriptions have been opened under the patronage of Mr. Philips of Andover for a turnpike from Andover to Salem. The cross roads from Salem into the interior, unless you pass in a circuitous route, are the worst in any of the Old Towns of Massachusetts from the poverty of the interjacent towns & the little attention paid to inland communications."

This was an era somewhat like our own. The change of travel from horseback to carriages brought about a period of new road construction corresponding to the building of automobile highways today. The Newburyport Turnpike was put through in 1802, a direct road to Andover from Middleton in 1804, and the winding old country road to Danvers was straightened in 1810. The long causeway, however, continued to be a problem. As late as 1808 the townspeople of Middleton, almost to a man, offered the work of their own hands and the labor of their oxen to repair it once more.

Meantime the earlier road, which had begun as an Indian trail, was frequently used for going to Andover, or, actually, to what is now North Andover. This way, after crossing the Ipswich River south of the present Maple Street Bridge, led through the lands, which, before the incorporation of Middleton, lay in Boxford. As early as 1689 one Francis Elliot was living near what is now the corner of Liberty and Maple Streets. In the record of his boundary lines, he speaks of Maple Street as the "way to Will's Hill," and Liberty Street as the Andover highway. On July 17, 1700, the town of Boxford laid out a road from Francis Elliot's house to Boxford village.[6] It is described in their town records thus: "from Francis Elliot's house to the mill-path as it is now improved, and as the trees are marked, and so on to Crooked-Pond Brook, and so on straight over said plain to the Fishing Brook, a little above the pout-hole, and so on to the road coming out of the field by Timothy Dorman's land, and part on Corporal Joseph Peabody's land — and so on to the meeting house."

This record was long a puzzle to Boxford historians, since the location of Elliot's house so near Will's Hill was not known until recently. This 1700 road followed the boundaries of his land, and the "mill-path" was the present Mill Street, which crosses Beech, or Boston, Brook. Beyond the bridge the road turned to the east (its course marked by a stone wall was visible when the Curtis mill pond was drained in 1963) and continued to the old Symonds house, and so north by a horse path, coming out at the Holmes estate on Old Middleton Road, and then continuing across the plain to Boxford.

In several land records of early date I have found Mill Street referred to as "Andover Old Road," indicating that the way led to Andover as well as to Boxford.[7] Its being called "old" in 1702 was probably by comparison with the later built 1684 route through Will's Hill. The exact way it followed beyond the mill bridge is still debatable. Sidney Perley, about two weeks before his death, explored a lane leading from the home of Charles E. Wilkins (the old Thomas Wilkins house on Liberty Street opposite School) eastward to Boston Brook. A town bridge built by David Kenney in 1759, had formerly made a crossing there, and a way once continued from it through the land now owned by George W. Smith on Mill Street. Even without a bridge the stream could easily have been forded in the old days before Pritchard's dam was built. Mr. Perley was told that this lane had long been known as "the trail", and with good reason he concluded that it was the course taken by the Indians in early times.

Before 1700 this circuitous route was made necessary by the fact that Liberty Street from the mill path to this lane was not at first a traveled way. As late as 1732 Francis Elliot in a deed to his son John (61-260) referred to it merely as "The way that goes by Edward Nicholls house." That the road was in use north of the lane we know, since Thomas Fuller built his bridge across the brook there in 1667. The whole road was used for years as an alternative to the Essex Street way and was sometimes referred to in its entire length as the "old Andover road." It was straightened and improved from time to time. One may still see what is left of an early curved section that was part of the original highway.

A third possible route to what is now the central part of Andover, once South Andover, followed the direction of the present Forest Street. At the Andover end it is still called Salem Street. This was known to Middleton residents as Andover South Road. It takes its departure from North Main Street at a point known as the "parting of the ways," since the highway built by the Fullers goes off to the northeast there, while the later Middleton Turnpike runs north from this junction.

These were the principal county roads, but many of the town roads were much traveled and the earliest houses built upon them. King Street is one of the first. In early days it was a continuation of the road across the river from the east that went by Francis Elliot's and the Way houses — "the road that goeth to Will's Hill." It turned south along the course taken by modern King Street to the Andover road at what is now Middleton Square. In 1698 in a deed from Thomas Fuller 2d to his son John it is called "the highway which goeth from Aaron Way's house to Topsfield." Aaron Way then lived where the tavern now stands. After Middleton was incorporated and the church built, it was always called "the road to the meeting house." On September 13, 1784, the town voted to "lay the Road out two Rods wide from the Revd Elias Smith's Corner" (where Mount Vernon joins it) "to Andover Road by Mr. John Estyes." Widening the road made it necessary to move the wall. That was done and it has not been changed to the present day. King Street is still two rods wide.

The way to the meeting house meandered around a long curve, not convenient for carriage travel, which was becoming more frequent. It was not long before both county and town were considering the construction of a new and improved highway from Middleton to Beverly. On January 25, 1810, John Fuller sold the town of Middleton two acres for a public highway through his land and agreed that he would "make a good and sufficient fence on the North and on the South side of the premises, which fence shall be made and the said road be opened for use of the publick within six months." This is now the section of Maple Street between the church and the west end of King Street. East of the church the road had previously taken an uneven course to the river, going a short way up Liberty Street, then east over the hillside north of the Bewsher house and down to the bridge. To straighten and level this section the road was cut through Hannah Peabody's pasture. (She was never recompensed for the land taking!). David Wilkins' well also disappeared in the process.

Besides these county roads and main thoroughfares, many crossroads and shorter ways were kept up by the town. Several of them were "layed out" by Middleton at the time of its incorporation in 1728. Two of them, in the former Topsfield area, led down through Francis Peabody's land towards the river bridge. They were the beginnings of East Street. A third, which had no doubt been used for horse travel, was improved from Thomas Curtis's at the Andover line all the way to Elliot and Carrell (Liberty Street). Still another was laid out from Samuel Symonds's house to the Peabody sawmill on Beech Brook and then south on the way to the ironworks, coming out on Andover Road as Mill Street still does today. As mentioned above, the wall of this road is plainly visible when the mill pond is dry.

Lake Street, north of the pond, must have been one of the very first traveled ways in Middleton, for Bray Wilkins and John Gingell had built their houses there side by side and later, Wilkins's descendants owned and lived on the adjacent lands. The town voted to accept this way as a road, May 9, 1786, following a petition by Samuel Wilkins and Richard Thomas. It had been laid out by the selectmen from the Wilkins house, past Thomas's barn and field, past Elisha Fuller's barn to Estey's land, going south of Archelaus Kenney's house, and so to "Mr. Estyes well Crotch," the road to be one pole and a half wide.

As early as 1730 School Street was laid out by the town from Liberty Street to Essex Street, to be made and maintained by Lieut. Thomas Fuller and Samuel Berry at their own expense. Other men also were given permission to work out their highway rates on roads that went through their land or near their houses.

Boston Street was one of the last main roads to be built. It ran through land owned by Timothy Fuller and Jacob Fuller, and Solomon and Isaac Wilkins, and ended at "Phelpses Corner," the junction with the road from North Reading near the mills. Lands owned by Capt. Flint, Stephen Flint, and Samuel Flint were crossed by the road at that end, and the owners were allowed to put up cart gates. As completed in 1753, the road was but twenty-five feet wide.

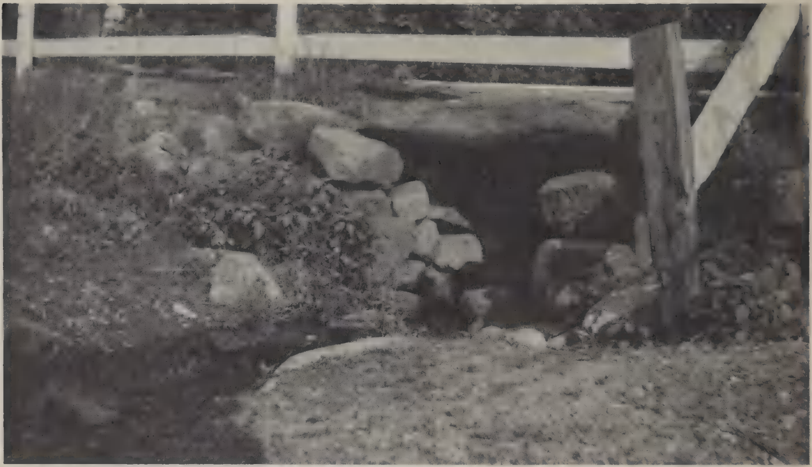
Besides these more important roads, there was a crisscrossing of farm lanes, some still in use. The more traveled ways were changed, widened and improved from time to time and are doubtless far different from what they were originally. Such a road was the private way made by the

Stiles family as a shortcut to the Boxford church. There was a great deal of controversy in 1788 when the town took over this lane, which connected Essex Street and the Stiles farm with the Isaac Berry place on Liberty Street. Ezekiel Stiles built a stone wall across it as a measure of defiance, but it had been used as a public way and the selectmen were determined to keep it open. Stiles petitioned the County Court, but was finally obliged to give way to the town.

Peabody Street in its full length was one of the last accepted town ways. It does not appear on the surveyed map made by Simeon Kenney in 1795 and it was not a public road until 1809. As the result of an appeal by Nehemiah Berry, whose land lay near the corner of School and Liberty Streets, the town voted in 1807 to accept proposals for building a road by Berry's house and continuing it to the land of Major Elias Wilkins, east of the present river bridge on Peabody Street. Two years later $300 was appropriated for this purpose. The east end of Peabody Street from Symonds's house through Bradford's land to the county road (East Street) had already been finished in 1782, with a cant gate at the end.

As the years went on a great deal of work was done on improving the existing ways and even more on the building and upkeep of bridges. Middleton is crossed by a number of streams, the most important being the Ipswich River with its six bridges. At the southwestern part of the town there was a bridge as early as 1675. This has been used continuously and was rebuilt as late as 1936. The so-called Log Bridge, built about 1688, is still in use, although the regular traffic now goes over the river on Route 114, the location of the turnpike span dating from 1804. The bridge over the river on Maple street is mentioned in a Topsfield town record March 3, 1707/8, but it may have been there much earlier. The river bridge on Peabody Street was built in the early 1700's by the Symondses and other neighbors for their own convenience. On March 1, 1768, the town voted to allow Zorobabel Peabody and Samuel Symonds to work out their highway taxes for that year by "working on the River Bridge between Symonds and Mr. Robard Bradfords." The first mention in town records of Averell's or Thunder Bridge over the river on East Street occurs on May 19, 1761, when it was voted to build a bridge and causeway "near Paul Averell's" at a cost of forty pounds.

Pout Pond Brook was crossed in four places — all sites of importance. In its upper course, called Andover Meadow Brook, near the present location of the Danvers water works dam, the Wilkinses had a mill before 1720. Without doubt they built a bridge there to reach their house on the north bank. In later years the town assumed the responsibility of keeping up this "Sawmill Bridge", in addition to a private one at the mill. The "long causeway" lay over this brook where it ran sluggishly



Stone Culvert over brook on Mount Vernon Street built by Soloman Wilkins in 1826. Covered by huge stone slab, it is still in use.

under Andover Road, now Essex Street, but even before the building of the causeway, the brook had been spanned by John Gingell. A bridge over the same stream was maintained at Nichols' mill on Liberty Street, probably from the time of Nichols's first settlement there in 1713. Farther down the brook below the ironworks dam, there were two small bridges over the divided outlet from the pond under Mill Street.

Beech, or Boston, Brook was an important stream, almost a river. As mentioned above, Thomas Fuller built a bridge over it in 1667 on his own land, which was within the bounds of Salem, but close to the Boxford line. This is now Munday Bridge. In 1759 the town allowed David Kenney his bill of costs for the construction of a bridge farther down the stream. It was situated about one-quarter mile east of the junction of School and Liberty Streets, but any evidence of its existence disappeared with the building of Pritchard's dam. It was still in use in 1811, but out of repair, when Nehemiah Berry, walking across its bare framework with Elijah Case, fell into the brook and was drowned. The span across the brook at the old Peabody sawmill has probably been there in one form or another since before 1700. A short distance down stream the brook runs under the part of Peabody Street laid out in 1809. The original structure was replaced and the road widened in 1957.

In March 1748 the town voted to build a bridge over a sluiceway leading from Middleton Pond into Solomon Wilkins's grist mill (just below Middleton center), on condition that he would maintain forever the bridge over the old brook below it. This running water, which once no doubt was a picturesque feature pleasing to the eye of the passing traveler, now goes underground.

In 1826 the town voted to cover with stones a small span over the brook near Abijah Fuller's on Mount Vernon Street. According to the original specifications, the water course was to be four feet wide. It still has the same width and is covered by the same stones. It was built by Solomon Wilkins at a cost of nineteen dollars.

A bridge on River Street near Joseph Hutchinson's was kept up by the town over a brook that ran down to the Ipswich River west of his house.

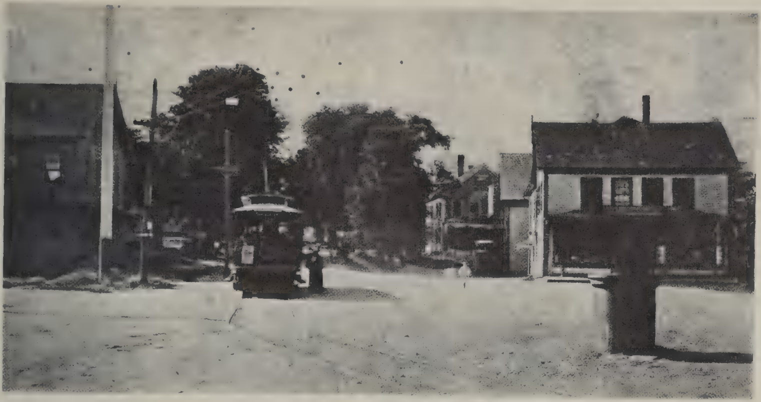
Middleton's streets and roads were not given the names they now have nor were they marked with street signs until the 1880's. Back in 1854 a report to the town called attention to the need for more guide boards. In the committee's opinion "Guide boards are of more value to the traveler than scores of men and boys with conflicting stories, which leave him behind his time and perhaps send him some two miles out of his way." In that year a few signs not all in good condition, were to be found on the main highways: two at the Danvers line, one at Colonel Batchelder's (the tavern), two at Elbridge Stiles' place (the parting paths), one at

Eunice Lemon's corner (Liberty and Maple Streets), one at Quiner's corner or Howe station, one by the Center Schoolhouse, and one at the papermills. Four more were recommended: at Samuel H. Wilkins, corner of Liberty and Peabody Streets, one near Porter Gould's, East Street, one on the road by C. K. Wilkins (Gregory Street), and another near the house of Jesse Estey.

On August 25, 1883, the town appointed three persons "to select names for the streets in the town and number the residences on said streets."

CHAPTER II NOTES

1. The identification of the "Indian Bridge" with the Maple Street bridge, as indicated on maps by W. B. Upham and Sidney Perley, is incorrect. Their error of one-quarter mile shows why they could not make the Middleton-Boxford line meet where it crosses the river. Cf. Lura Woodside Watkins, "Where was the Indian Bridge over the Ipswich River?," *Old-Time New England,* XLVI, No. 3, (Winter 1956).
2. *Essex County Court Papers,* XIV, (1671).
3. "Salem Town Records," in *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* III, 117.
4. Ibid., III, 121.
5. *Essex County Court Papers,* XXXIX, 144.
6. Sidney Perley, *History of Boxford,* Boxford, Mass., 1880, p. 134.
7. Thomas Cave, Sr., to Thomas Nichols, March 4, 1702 (18-85); Philip Knight to Daniel and Jonathan Keney, July 10, 1707 (33-259); and estate of Nathaniel Carrel to Francis Elliot, Jr., January 19, 1723 (45-136).



Postcard view of Middleton Square in 1905.

CHAPTER III

Water Mills of Middleton

Although the Will's Hill men were called "the farmers", farming and lumbering were not their sole occupations. At first, no doubt, all their time was devoted to clearing the land. It staggers the mind to think of the tremendous work accomplished by these few men in opening up a region described by early explorers as a "hideous swamp, a harbor for bears." The difficulties were, in fact, so great that no one attempted to settle this wilderness until the Wilkinses and Fullers, near Middleton Pond, and the Nicholses and Hobbses father east, arrived in the mid sixteen-hundreds.

Once these few hardy souls were settled on the land, they had perforce to cultivate it for necessary food; yet almost from the beginning they worked at other occupations as well. The prime needs in a pioneer community were a sawmill and a grist, or corn, mill. Even before these had been built, Bray Wilkins and his sons were cutting thousands of barrel staves, clapboards, and shingles, and selling them. They also sold "bolts" — presumably the dowels or pins used in house construction. All these were made by hand. But, even before 1700, there was more than one sawmill in the village. Although it was simple enough for two men working together to hand-saw planks for buildings, our forefathers were no more eager than we to waste energy, and wherever possible they built water power mills with up-and-down saws.

It is interesting to note that the historian Sidney Perley in a letter to George Towne, written in 1910, said that he had not found a sawmill in Salem before 1700. Perhaps he did not include the Will's Hill part of Salem. Had he done so, he would have found the Fuller mill and at least two others.

The first sawmill in the part of Middleton that was formerly Salem was probably the one erected by Thomas Fuller on the brook out of Middleton, or Wilkins, Pond. In a conveyance to his son Thomas, Jr., on April 22, 1690 (8-178), Fuller mentions "the brooke which runs to the saw mill, and the saw mill brook to be his easterly bounds till it comes down below the saw mill to a grate turn in the brook." On the same day (8-179) the father leased to the son the whole farm "lying on the easterly side of the brooke which runs out of Wilkins pond down to the saw mill and so into Ipswich River." This places the mill between the present Mount Vernon Street and the river, and I find it so located by William H. Upham on his 1692 map of Salem Village.

Thomas Fuller made a will, July 4, 1698, a fortnight before his death, in which he bequeathed to his son Jacob "my right in the saw mill Irons five parts of six being mine there being six parts in the saw mill Irons." This machinery was valued at three pounds.

On November 17, 1710, Thomas Fuller, Jr., gave to his son William land described as "Lying on the west side of the pond as allso the pond itselfe down to the Dam where the old Saw mill stood." This referred to the mill pond and not to Middleton Pond. So by 1710 this mill was a thing of the past.

An old mill dam may still be seen on the "sawmill brook". Although it is in the location noted by Fuller as being above a " grate turn in the brook," it is not the seventeenth-century structure, but a later one built or restored by Fuller's greatgrandson Timothy Fuller in 1756. On October second of that year Timothy bought of Jonathan Wilkins (122-103) land along the brook, beginning at the "old dam." Various references to Timothy Fuller's sawmill occur in town records. This gentleman was notorious in Middleton and elsewhere as a trouble maker, always involved in lawsuits and trying to get around the law. In May 1770, he put an article in the town warrant "To see if the Town will except of a Narro way through Timothy Fuller's Sawmill Dam Beloo his Dwelling hous For the Fish to pass through." In those days it was extremely important to keep fishways open so that alewives and other useful fish might reach the ponds for spawning, Timothy was seeking an exception, which he did not get. The mill is mentioned again in 1771, when Ezra Putnam wanted the town to pay him for "gitting" a log out of Fuller's sawmill dam. There seems to be no further record of the operation of this mill.

The stream from Middleton Pond was formerly a powerful one of great beauty. It was utilized very early, not only for sawing, but also for grinding grain. John Esty, dying in 1720/21, left to his son John his "share in the Corne mill near my hous." An inventory taken February 6, 1720/21, shows that Esty's share was valued at £120. John Esty lived in a house he had bought of Aaron Way when he moved to Will's Hill from

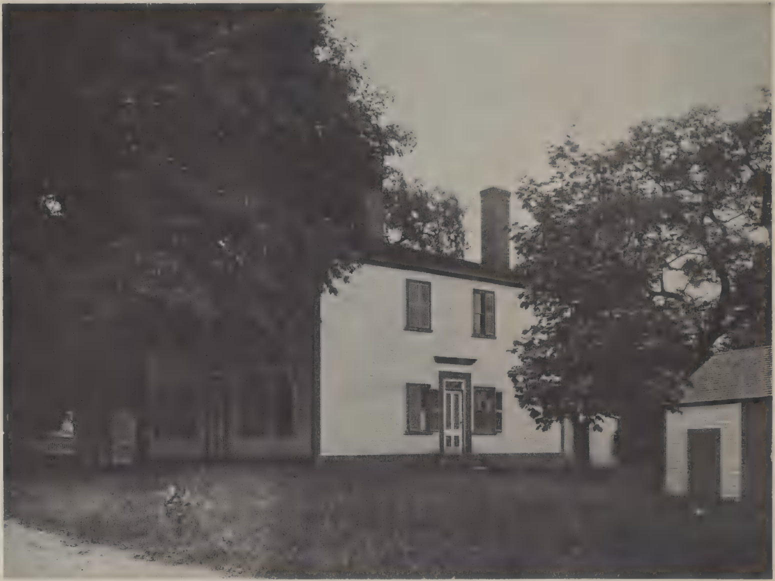
Topsfield in 1698 (14-203). The remains of the Way house have recently been discovered in the basement of the old Estey Tavern, later owned by John's descendants. The tavern still stands at the northerly corner of Maple Street and the square. The mill "near my hous", as later records show, was on the outlet of the pond east of Main Street, just below the square.

On March 31, 1735 (70-179), Jonathan Estey, son of John, made an agreement with Solomon Wilkins providing for the erection of a mill where such a building had formerly stood. The deed reads:

> for the use of a mill or Mills a Certain Tract of Land Lying and being in Middleton said land lyeth near to said Estey's Dwelling house it lyeth on the North and South side of a brook that runs out of the pond commonly called Wills hill pond said pond is on the south of a hill called Wills hill and said Land is the place where there was formerly a mill and said Land is about thirty-three rod and an half and is bounded as follows beginning at a stake and stones standing by Andover road and from thence running eastrely Nine rods to a stake and stones and from thence Southerly two rods and nine feet to a stake and stones and from thence westerly Ten rods to a stake by said Road and from thence Northerly by the road to the first bound Mark Mentioned it is to be understood by these presents that the said Wilkins is to Enjoy the One half of said Land for the use of a mill or Mills and that he and his heirs Executors and Administrators are to Enjoy with the use and benefitte of One half of said Land One half of the Stream passing through said Land for the use of a Mill or Mills so long as he or they shall See Meet to Erect them on said Land.

In the following year, on February 10, 1735/6 (81-34), Jonathan Estey sold to Isaac Wilkins for £250 four acres of land with a dwelling house on the corner of Andover Road and the highway to the meeting house, together with "one quarter of the Corn mill which stands thereon." This house and mill stood on the southerly corner of Maple Street and the square, a site now occupied by a gas station. The mill conveyed remained in operation for well over one hundred years. Solomon Wilkins continued to run it until his death, January 7, 1765. According to a church record, he was "killed by a fall under the wheel of the corn mill, whether Drowned or killed by the fall is uncertain." He then owned "one Quartor and Half Quartor part of a corn mill," which came into the possession of Jonathan Wilkins, who had married Solomon's daughter Lydia.

Meantime Isaac Wilkins had died, leaving his estate to his wife Anna, who was also a Wilkins. From this source five-eighths of the mill and house descended to Jonathan, their nephew. On February 28, 1770 (205-



House at lower corner of Maple Street and the Square.
Built by Dr. Silas Meriam in 1804.

101), he sold the estate for £160 to Silas Meriam, a physician who came from Concord. Meriam was destined to play an important part in the history of Middleton. Devoted to the town and its people, he lived until January 25, 1812, when he was stricken suddenly while on the way to visit a patient. During all these years he ran the grist mill and a store connected with it, where he sold groceries as well as grain products. In 1804 Dr. Meriam built a large and handsome square house to replace the old Jonathan Estey dwelling. This is still remembered by older citizens as it originally appeared, surrounded by great trees. Some fifty years ago it was moved down Main Street below the brook and converted into an apartment house. Little is left of its former dignity.

The historian David Stiles[2] quotes a town record to the effect that the town voted Dr. Meriam permission to put up flash boards to raise the level of the pond three feet. The dam was evidently west of Andover Road (Main Street). The course of the water had been changed before Meriam's time, for there are various early references to the "old" brook and the "new" brook. One stream ran through the mill; the other took its natural channel below.

We are fortunate in having some firsthand knowledge about what went on in the Meriam mill. The account book of Colonel Benjamin Peabody, whose sister Lydia was the doctor's second wife, is a remarkable source of information about many things.[3] The colonel was a man who knew how to make things go. Whether in the line of carpentry, masonry blacksmithing, milling, animal husbandry, or writing legal documents and keeping town records, he was equally and efficiently at home. He was a brother of Joseph Peabody, noted shipmaster of Salem, whom he helped to start on his career. A copy of Benjamin's account book made by Martha J. Averill of Middleton is in the files of the Essex Institute.

Peabody's first account with Dr. Meriam ran from January 1786, to September 1789, when he "then reckoned and settled with Doct. Silas Meriam." This was the unhurried manner of bookkeeping in the eighteenth century. On January 11 and 12, 1788, he "put" two boxes in the mill, one in the store and the other for the "Gudging" (gudgeon).[4] On various occasions he worked several days on unspecified jobs. October 24, 1788, he spent a day repairing the floor of the waste way and a few days later he covered a stone bridge. On December 9, 1788, he notes "to a days work picking the mill and setting it to work — two shillings."

The entry "picking the mill" occurs frequently thereafter. The small grooves, often carved in intricate design, on grist mill stones had to be sharpened regularly by a tedious hand process to ensure efficient grinding. An implement set on a wooden handle like a hammer and with a head running to a shaped edge at each end was used for this task. The best ones were made of steel, but several of ordinary iron have been found in and around Middleton. An iron pick was probably the kind used at this time. A hoist to lift the upper millstone from the nether one was provided to facilitate the difficult operation. Peabody picked the doctor's stone fourteen times between December 9, 1788, and December 30, 1790, and in later years, whenever the mill was running, he did this work once a month.

The variety of Benjamin Peabody's services for Meriam may be illustrated by the following:

Dec. 3 & 4, 1795 to 2 days work putting arms to his cogwheel	0. 10. 0
Dec. 18 & 19, 1795 to one day and a half work picking the mill and picking the horns into the runners	0. 5. 0
Dec. 25, 1795 to killing a cow	0. 2. 0
Oct. 26 & 27, 1796 to two days work about his two upper flooms	0. 12. 0
Nov. 28, 1796 to killing a hog	0. 6. 0
April 29, 1797 my oxen one day a haling rocks	0. 3. 0
Sept. 3, 1797 On day collaring chimneys & other things	0. 4. 6
Oct. 9, 1797 to making a coffin for Lydia (Dr. Meriam's daughter.)	1. 14. 0
Oct. 28, 1797 picking and setting the mill a going	0. 4. 0
June 13, 1798 to going to the Doctor to blood a cow	0. 1. 6
Dec. 3, 1798 to killing a hog and wedging the gudging	0. 3. 0
Feb. 11, 1799 to putting a box & picking the mill	0. 5. 0
May 24, 1799 to ¾ of a day grafting	0. 4. 6
Oct. 4, 1799 to a days work at the upper floor, (floom?)	0. 4. 6
Nov. 27, 1799 to killing an ox	0. 2. 0
Dec. 12, 1799 my slay to Salem	0. 2. 0

After the death of Dr. Meriam, his heirs signed over their rights in the estate to his son Andrew. The name was now spelled "Merriam". Included were the farm, the mansion house, the grist mill and privilege of flowing the pond, a peat meadow, land in Andover and Reading, and a pew in the meeting house. The mill appears on the 1830 map of Middleton standing across the brook halfway between Main Street and a point opposite where King Street now enters Maple. The building was still there, but in ruins, when the Essex Institute came to Middleton for a field day on June 15, 1859. The secretary in his report of the occasion commented thus on the mill:[5]

Passing across the green, — the attention of some rested on a fine old ruin of a grist-mill, another village institution of other days, but like all the rest, modified and outworn by the joint pressure of time and progress. Very few more picturesque old mill ruins than this are to be found in New England. The little stream that used to turn its now decaying wheel still wanders cheerfully down from the disued dam above and today affords "good picking" of botanical and animated varieties to the ramblers of the Institute along its borders.

THOMAS FULLER AND THE "GRATE MEADOW"

The search for Fuller's great meadow and its owners is one of the longest voyages I have taken on the sea of history. It all began with the finding of a reference to a dam and to the meadow being flooded in 1696. To understand its significance one must go back even earlier.

Thomas Fuller was a blacksmith, who lived in Woburn until his purchase in 1663 of land in the part of Salem now Middleton. On December 2 of that year (3-1), Daniel Denison of Ipswich transferred to Fuller 300 acres of his original grant and other land remaining after he had had some dealings with Bray Wilkins and John Gingell, who had purchased the Governor Bellingham grant.

July 1, 1672, Fuller also acquired 250 acres within the bounds of Reading, but adjoining the Salem line and the Bellingham farm.[6] He was already in possession of the land, which had been granted to him by the town of Reading for "procuring an artist to Surveigh their two mile grant." Fuller's deed from Shuball Walker of Merrimac was in the nature of a release of an imperfect title. The great meadow was part of this grant and was therefore in Reading.

Thomas Fuller gave several pieces of land to his son Jacob, April 3, 1684 (9-2221) Among them was "half the meadow Comonly Caled the great meadow lying in Reding bounds." On February 9, 1693/4, a few years before his death, Fuller gave the other half of the meadow to his grandson Thomas third (47-250).

Jacob and Thomas third, or Tertius, soon proposed to set up some kind of milling operation but found that they could not flood the meadow without trespassing. Accordingly, on November 3, 1696, they bought an acre of land from Aaron Way. As previously mentioned, Way lived where the Estey Tavern now stands, but the acre was near Reading line. His deed to the Fullers reads thus:

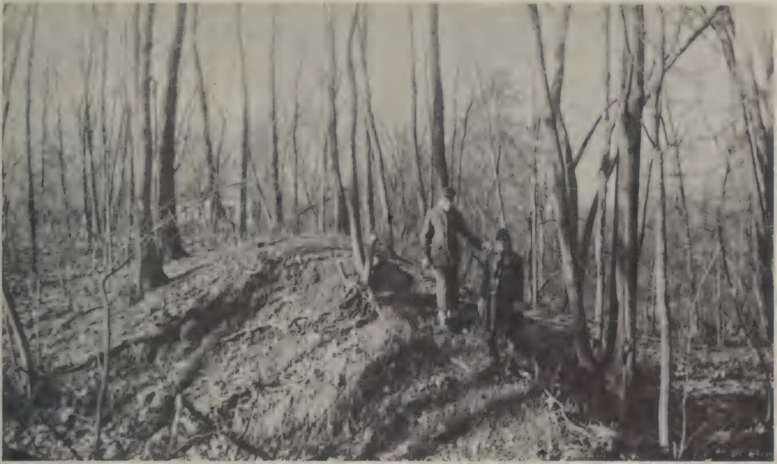
In consideration of a valuable summe of Money — to Jacob Fuller and Thomas Fuller, Tertius — about one acre of upland in Salem — Lying on both sides of the Brooke which runns out of Fullers great meadow so called it being for their conveniency to Make a Damme and to flow the aforesaid Meadow and the aforesaid acre of Land is Bounded at the Northwesterly corner with a bastard Oake Tree Marked and standing on the Westerly side of the aforesaid brooke about four rods from the Brooke; from that to turne Easterly over the aforesaid Brooke to a small white Oake Tree Marked and standing about six rods to the Eastward of said Brook; from that to runne Southerly about twenty poles to an Elme Tree Marked having a great rock lying on the Northeasterly side thereof and to runne Southwesterly from the bounds first mentioned taking in all the upland there adjoyning to the aforesaid Fullers Meadow that shall be flowed with Water by their drowning or flowing their aforesaid Meadow.

In 1967 there is still evidence of a dam in the "grate meadow," which lies south and southwest of Forest Street — the old road from South Andover to Salem — at the point where the road crosses the Reading line. This piece of land is north of Swan Pond and drains that area into Knight's Pond. The ramifications of its later ownership are many. July 23, 1713, Jacob Fuller, blacksmith, sold his share in the meadow for forty pounds to Joseph Green, pastor of the Salem Village church (27-140). It was described as lying in Reading or Salem and comprising fourteen acres. It was bounded southerly on the meadow of Thomas Fuller, Jr., the brooke or ditch now filled being the bounds and westerly on the upland of Horndells it being all my part of that meadow called Fullers great Meadow and also halfe of that piece of land that I bought of Aaron Way where the Damm now is to flow the said Meadow together with all the fence upon or about it Said Meadow and my part of the Dam & Sluice there being bounded on land of the Wilkinses or John Easty.

Clearly the two Fullers must have conducted a mill business — probably a sawmill.

Thomas Tertius, later Junior, held his share of the meadow until October 15, 1740, when he sold it with other lands to his son Timothy (80-134). Meantime Rev. Joseph Green had passed away and his widow Elizabeth disposed of his fourteen acres to Aquilla Wilkins, John Wilkins, Jr., and Daniel Wilkins, Sr., for seventy-five pounds. This transfer took place February 5, 1716/17 (32-27).

Aquilla Wilkins's share was divided into thirds among his sons and was last heard of in the possession of a daughter-in-law in 1765. Daniel Wilkins sold his share in 1729, and it became the property of David Wilkins, who left it to his widow when he died in 1741. She married again and



Great dam of broken rock built over Ten Load Meadow Brook of Forest Street for a sawmill, c. 1770.

the fate of the land is uncertain. John Wilkins, dying in 1750, left his part of the "grate meadow" to his son Samuel. Apparently no active business was carried on by any of these later owners. The mill history must date within the years 1696 to 1716.

THE TEN LOAD MEADOW

In the later eighteenth century milling activity was transferred to a rapid stream running through "ten load meadow," an area of several acres lying north of the great meadow and north of Andover Road (Forest Street). This is first mentioned in the will of John Esty, dated May 9, 1720, in which he says, "allso I give to my sone Nathanell four accors of meddow called by the name of the teen load meadow." What became of this inheritance is still a question. On February 7, 1735/6 (81-73), we find Henry Wilkins, shortly before his demise, giving some parts of Ten Load Meadow to his son Aquilla, one of the partners in the purchase of the great meadow from Mrs. Green. Aquilla conveyed this land, about three acres, to his son Ebenezer, March 7, 1744 (111-125). Shortly thereafter, on June 10, 1749, we get a hint that milling was about to begin again in the region of the meadows. Timothy Fuller, who still owned half of the original mill site, gave to Archelaus Fuller "for love" (104-106) a piece of upland situate in Middleton, the bounds of which began at the west side of Ten Load Meadow brook, "said Land containing one quarter of an Acer with a priviledge of passing & repassing to said land and the priviledge of the stream to set a saw mill on."

I have been unable to learn whether Archelaus Fuller actually built a sawmill at that time. Not until February 1772, when Jonathan Wilkins of Middleton sold all of his large holdings in various parts of the town, have I found any reference to such a building. When Wilkins conveyed his property to Elisha Fuller of Bedford, he included "one quarter part of a saw mill being & standing in Middleton, now owned by Capt. Archelaus Fuller and myself situate near to the house of John Lemons with all the privileges thereunto belonging" (134-182).

Archelaus Fuller became a colonel in the Revolutionary War and he died in the course of his duty in 1777. Not until March 6 of the preceding year can he be associated with the location of the sawmill at Ten Load Meadow. At that time he purchased from Ebenezer Wilkins two certain pieces of Meadow and Upland called "ten load meadow" (134-186). One of the boundaries of the land was John Lamon's (or Lemon's) line. Since this was only three acres of seven mentioned in the inventory of Fuller's property, he must have acquired a larger part in some other way.

In the settlement of the Fuller estate, September 6, 1785, half a sawmill, millyard, stream, &c was left to Archelaus's daughter Mary. The land was bounded on the east by Goodale and on the south and west by John Lamon. Mary Fuller married William Symonds of Hillsborough, New Hampshire, in 1792. On September 13, 1796 (162-295), she and her husband conveyed the meadow and upland adjoining "that was formerly improved for a saw mill yard" to Eleazer Putnam for $133.34.

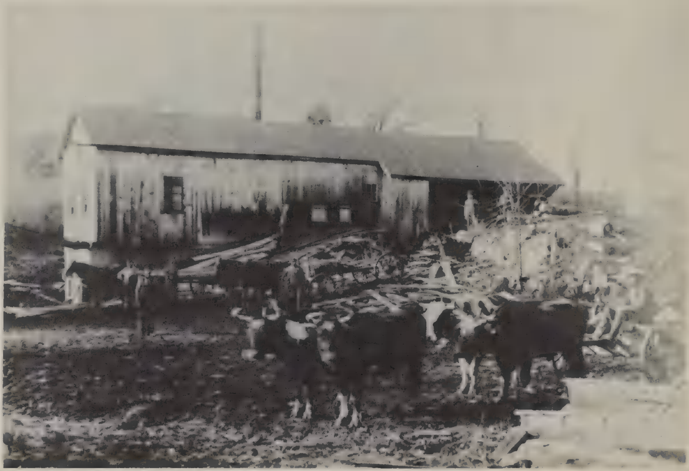
The site of the Ten Load Meadow sawmill may still be seen. Turning north into a lane off Forest Street just short of the Reading line, one goes about two city blocks and then right for one hundred yards or so over a stony mound covered with burdocks and other weeds and finds oneself on top of what is left of the earthworks dam. The water, a strong and rapid brook, rushes down through a rocky ravine. Further examination shows that the mound traversed is built up of loose rock and is all part of the original dam, which must have been very extensive and constructed at a great cost of time and labor.

THE ESTEY-EMERSON MILLS

After flowing through Knight's Pond the waters of Ten Load Meadow brook run eastward through Andover Meadow Pond, as it was first called, and then rapidly on the same course to Pout Pond a mile away. In early records this stream was sometimes called "Andover Meadow Brook" and sometimes "Pout Pond Brook." Today the latter term also applies to the stream below Pout Pond. This water power was early utilized by the Wilkins family, perhaps from the date of their first settlement of Will's Hill. However, no definite record of it has come to light

The first allusion I have found to such a mill in the Wilkins family appears in the will of Benjamin, son of the first settler, Bray. On August 15, 1715, he bequeathed his quarter part of the corn mill to his sons Benjamin, Jonathan, and Daniel to be divided in equal shares between them. This is probably the mill referred to a little later, January 2, 1723/4, by John Wilkins, Bray's grandson, in which he says: "I give to my son David his heirs and assigns forever my loot on the North sid of andivor brook where formerly stood a Corn mill and saw mill." A large part of David Wilkins's inheritance remained in the hands of his descendants until recent years, and we know just where his house stood. At present a small road (Lake Street) leads down hill north of Forest Street and across the brook just below the dam built by the Danvers water company. David Wilkins owned the land beyond the bridge.

In 1783 (133-80) David Wilkins sold a piece of land along the brook to John Estey, the tavern keeper, for thirty pounds. This was said to be



Sawmill off Forest Street run by Darius Emerson and later by his son Milton from 1842 until after 1900.

a "certain tract of land and all my interest and right in the stream adjoining upon said land, with the privilege of flowing the stream as far as my right extends." The bounds began at Elisha Fuller's land on the west side of the brook at "the old sluiceway." This may have been the very sluiceway that was in use before the death of John Wilkins in 1723.

Estey's mill pond and dam were farther upstream than the present waterworks dam. When he sold his mill to Daniel Fuller in 1816, the deed mentioned a sluice thirty rods above the bridge. While this enterprise was primarily for sawing wood, Estey also ran a grist mill on the first floor. A later owner, Darius Emerson, recalled the fact, and it is also a matter of record. It is listed in the state list of lands and estates, October 1, 1798. In the 1801 list of estates a sawmill is noted in the ownership of John Estey, Jr., but no grist mill is mentioned. It was, however, included in the sale of the property and was in operation for many years.

Daniel Fuller had married Sally, daughter of the elder John Estey, and was therefore a brother-in-law of the younger John. The Estey affairs did not go too well, either in the tavern or at the mill. January 12, 1816 (207-277), Estey mortgaged the mill to Daniel Fuller as follows:

> A tract of land in Middleton, with a saw mill and grist mill thereon, containing one acre and nineteen poles, bounded beginning at the southeasterly corner of the southerly side of the brook at the westerly end of the bridge, thence running westerly northwesterly and northerly, bounded on the southerly and southwesterly side of the brook by land of Abilgail Fuller Kimball, about thirty rods to the sluice on the southwesterly side of it, thence running northeasterly on the upper side of the Dam about six rods to Enos Wilkins' land thirteen rods to a stake and stones, thence southerly near the cart path leading from said Wilkins' house to the bridge, and so on across the bridge thirteen rods to a corner first mentioned.

Six months later, Estey, for $100, gave Daniel Fuller a quit-claim deed for the sawmill and the grist mill.

Daniel Fuller ran the enterprise until June 1, 1842, when he conveyed it by an unrecorded deed to Sewall Flint and Darius Emerson. In 1842 and 1849 Emerson was called a miller; in 1846, a box maker, indicating that he was doing both sawing and grinding. During the next twenty-five years the business suffered various financial difficulties and was heavily mortgaged. Calvin Putnam of Danvers, who was an "operator" on a large scale, bought a half interest in the mill, January 7, 1869 (7678-34). He had already purchased in Middleton several tracts of land, which he proceeded to denude. As one views the well wooded hillsides in Middleton today, it is hard to imagine them as they appeared when stripped of trees. But older residents can recall Will's Hill and many other places without a tree. Putnam so exhausted the timber in the surrounding area that he was willing to sell out to Milton Jenkings Emerson for the nominal sum of $100. Darius Emerson had died in 1875; Milton, more familiarly known as "Jinks," was his son.

The younger Emerson had actually been in charge of the mill for ten years and was thoroughly competent to run the business. In spite of the lack of raw material, he made a success of it. For some forty years he supplied the firm of Woodman Bros. and Ross of Danvers with box boards from the smaller pines. This was the later mainstay of the concern that had been running well over one hundred years.

THE NICHOLS CORN MILL

The owner of the first mill on Pout Pond Brook below the pond was a pioneer on the land. On his wedding day, April 9, 1713, Edward Nichols received as a gift from his father, John Nichols of Topsfield, "all his Lands both upland and Meadow on the other side of the River called Ipswich River Lying in the Township of Boxford — Lying between the Land of Francis Eliot and Daniel Keney joyning to pond brook and the river" (25-173). John Nichols was a grandson of William, the first settler in what is now Middleton, and he lived near the original homestead east of the river. In 1713 this was Topsfield and Edward was born in that town.

Just when Edward Nichols built his first mill is unknown. In 1724 he had a barn that was mentioned in a deed of adjacent land (45-229); a tree standing by the road (now Liberty Street) was "near Nichols's Barn." Presumably he was living close by. The first mention of his mill occurs in a town record, February 11, 1733/4, when the town voted "that Joseph Fuller and Daniel Wilkins Jur should be a Committee to take care that the water is not stopt at the ould Dam above Edward Nicholses his Corn Mill." Later records show that this "old dam" was about 215 feet from the road, while another dam, still remaining in part, was at least 650 feet west of Liberty Street, the so-called Andover Road. That was in 1798; in 1733 it may have been different.

In the town meeting warrant for October 9, 1734, a measure was formulated "To see if the Town will mend the way where it is damnified by Nichols mill pond if he will repare such damage for time to come." The proposal was not acted upon.

Although Nichols owned a huge acreage running eastward to the

Ipswich River, he bought thirteen acres more near the ironworks, which was flourishing on Pout Pond Brook about half a mile downstream, and with it he acquired a one-twelfth share in the works. This was on December 1, 1736 (73-184).

The presence of two enterprises requiring water rights on the same stream apparently led to a controversy between Nichols and Thomas Cave, the manager of the ironworks. This appears in a deposition (77-89) dated September 5, 1738, made by Joseph Knight as a witness to an agreement made by the two mill owners. It reads:

> Deposition of Joseph Knight, aged 54 years who testified — that some years past he was called to be a witness of an agreement between Thomas Cave and Edward Nichols both of Middleton — Agreement was that sd Nicholls should proceed to finish his Mill that was erected and to make a Dam to Raise Water for said Mill and promised that he would not Disturb or molest him (Nichols) paying him (Cave) the damage yearly in case they could not agree — it should be left to Mr. Thorndike Proctor of Salem to determine what damages were — Joseph Knight.
>
> John Nichols, aged 71 years, (Edward's father) testified to truth of above.

The question of clearing Pout Pond Brook came up once more in town meeting September 13, 1742, when it was proposed to clear the whole brook from the "Long Casse Way" (at Essex Street) to Mr. Edward Nichols' mill. Nothing came of this suggestion and Edward was left to do his own clearing.

Edward Nichols had four children: Stephen, born February 10, 1716; Benjamin and Joseph, twins, born April 14, 1720; and a daughter Hannah, born August 28, 1724. When and where his death occurred seems not to be recorded, as his estate was not probated in Essex County. We only know that it was probably before February 20, 1748/49 when Thomas Eliot deeded to Stephen and Benjamin a sizeable tract of land with buildings south and west of the Nichols property (94-76). Included also were three acres north of the brook, the whole at a cost of L1660 old tenor. At this time Benjamin had already married Jerusha Eliot (June 7, 1744), while Stephen remained single. Although both were called yeomen, they ran the mill together.

On May 22, 1751, for a token payment of five pounds, Stephen sold to Benjamin thirty-six acres of land "with a house and barn thereon with half a corn mill thereunto adjoyning" (155-207). This was in the nature of an exchange, for the land was largely a part of the original grant to their father Edward. Most of it was east of Andover

Road and extended to Ipswich River. Its northern boundary ran along by the ironworks dam and pond and then up the brook to the mill, and "so through the mill to the chimney of said mill," then south to the land purchased of Thomas Eliot and east to the road. This deed to Benjamin also included twelve other acres of land and a half interest in thirty-three acres of meadow.

It is uncertain whether Stephen conveyed to his brother the original homestead of their father, or whether he lived in it himself. Not far west of Liberty Street and a few hundred feet south of the brook, a cellar hole may still be seen. It is on an elevation above the low and damp ground flooded in spring by the brook, and there is cleared land all around it. This was presumably the Thomas Eliot house.

Shortly after this transaction Stephen married Elizabeth Hutchinson, August 7, 1752. They had a family of ten, but there is no indication that they were ever under any financial embarassment. During the next twenty years the Nicholses must have worked in competition with the Wilkins (later Meriam) mill in the center of the town and with the grist mill at South Middleton. No doubt they served the entire eastern part of Middleton, which seems then to have been a little village in itself, whose farmers would see no reason for traveling farther to get their corn ground.

Stephen died at the age of sixty in 1776. The inventory of his possessions mentions house, barn, the lands, "with half a corn mill belonging to Sd Estate." The property was valued at £395. 1.8. The administrators assigned to Benjamin the land he had owned jointly with his brother — a total of twenty-two and one half acres. The widow was given two thirds of the estate "with the East End of the Dwelling house and seller that is under it, and also sixteen feet of the East end of the Barn." The dimensions of this dower indicate that it was situated on the foundation noted above.

For a very short time Benjamin Nichols continued to run the mill with Stephen's widow and children, but, on December 4, 1776, three days after his brother's eldest son Stephen had come of age, he sold his share to his nephew (141-288). The deed is worded thus:

> The one half of a Certain Gristmill in Middleton now in the partnership with the widow Elizabeth Nichols and the heirs of Stephen Nichols late of Middleton dec'd said Mill standing upon pout pond brook so called and likewise to give liberty for people to pass and repass to and from said mill at all times when said Mill can grind together with all my part of Essentials that Belong to said mill.

Young Stephen paid £26. 13.4 for this half of the business. June 24, 1780, he paid Benjamin the comparatively large sum of one hundred pounds for a small triangular piece of upland only three-quarters of an acre in extent (141-208). This bounded from the "Tayle" of the mill, running down the brook nineteen and one-half rods to a wall, thence southeast fifteen rods to Nichols's land and thence northwest to the mill. Stephen's purpose in acquiring this piece was evidently that of adding to the buildings. When, on August 29, 1785, he mortgaged half the mill and this piece of land to Nathaniel Peabody, he mentioned "the buildings as they now stand" (143-279).

The next record of young Stephen's activities occurs June 4, 1798, when for eight dollars he bought from Amos Cave a strip of land along the north side of the brook. This particular transaction (186-91) involved only one acre, but it is important in enabling us to interpret what we see at the site today. The bounds ran southeasterly and easterly down the brook by a wall sixteen feet north of it, which is still standing. Running thus for twenty-nine poles (about 480 feet), it came to the old dam, which we may assume is the rock-built structure now visible from the road. At this point the boundary went north one rod and then southeast and east by land of Cave and Samuel Berry thirteen rods (215 feet) to the road. It then ran southeast along the road about 125 feet to the bridge over the brook and then up the middle of the brook "about thirty-seven rods (610 feet) to the Dam where the wasteway now is," and thence upstream fifteen rods farther to the starting point. By walking up a path south of the stream, one may reach this location of the dam; east of it a walled ditch now conducts the water from the brook and pours it down over the rocks at the site of the old dam.

In the list of estates made for the state in 1798 Stephen's mill is described as being nineteen feet square with one pair of stones and valued at $300. It is said to be in Pout Pond Meadow, thus corroborating the theory that the later mill or dam was some distance from the road. Nichols had a house lot bounded east by the county road; south by Jerusha Nichols; west by the heirs of Stephen Nichols, deceased; and north by Amos Cave and Samuel Berry. His dwelling was but twenty feet long and sixteen feet wide and one story high. Its value was only fifty-five dollars. This very small house was in all probability the original Edward Nichols homestead. Benjamin lived in a dwelling on the east side of the road later known as the old Gage house. In 1896 it was supposed to be two hundred years old and was said to have been constructed of heavy oak timbers pegged together. It was so rotted at the time of this report that it was torn down. After the death of Benjamin Nichols in 1798 and of his wife Jerusha four years later, the house went to John Nichols, a cousin, son of Samuel Nichols. He sold the entire farm of eighty acres and it passed through several hands thereafter.

Stephen Nichols made a much larger addition to his holdings in 1809, when, on May 10 (186-92), he bought from Amos Cave twenty-two acres north of the brook. Ten days later he mortgaged this whole property, including the grist mill and land east of the Andover Road, for $222, the exact amount he had paid Cave.

After 1800 the business must have suffered serious competition from the Merriam, Flint, and Estey mills. In 1819 Nichols was obliged to mortgage his house, barn, and mill once more; this mortgage to Sally Flint of Danvers (223-67) was still in force when he sold his farm and mill to Jesse Hayward of Danvers, April 1, 1823 (223-28). He himself was living in Danvers at that time and the end of the mill was at hand. It is said that Hayward tore it down. Although the elder Stephen's old house was standing in 1809, it, too, had disappeared by 1825. A transfer of land south of the homestead (244-68) mentions "a Corner of a wall near where was *formerly* a dwelling house of Stephen Nichols."

STEPHEN PEABODY'S SAWMILL

In the days of the ironworks on Pout Pond Brook, Mill Street was an important thoroughfare, but after the disappearance of that industry there was little travel on it for a time. At the town meeting of May 16, 1811, there was a question of discontinuing the road from its junction with Liberty Street to the house of Capt. Nathaniel Peabody at the corner of Peabody and Mill Streets. At this period the way was called the Ironworks Road. No action was taken on the measure and, before the road was entirely abandoned, another business became the excuse for its upkeep.

In 1801 the ironworks pond had drained away, although Pout Pond Brook still ran through the meadow and under Mill Street at the old ironworks bridge. On June first of that year (169-66), Amos Cave sold to Stephen Nichols, owner of the grist mill up the stream, nine acres "suitable for flowing a Mill pond," together with "the privilege of the water course from said Stephen's land above the brook," down to the old dam, and from the bridge to the heirs of Stephen Nichols, deceased.

This land and water privilege were conveyed by Nichols to Francis Peabody on December 6, 1815 (208-252). On the same day Peabody entered into an agreement with Nichols never to build a grist mill on that site. This document (220-189), here given in full, is an interesting illustration of the way in which such matters were handled one hundred and fifty years ago.

I Francis Peabody of Middleton, yeoman, am holden and stand firmly bound unto Stephen Nichols of Middleton aforesaid, yeoman, in the full sum of $1000 to be paid to the said Stephen Nichols in one year from the date hereof or to his heirs, executors or administrators to the payment whereof I bind myself my several heirs executors and administrators sealed with my seal dated this 6th day of December in the year of our Lord 1815. The condition of the foregoing obligation is such that whereas the said Stephen Nichols hath conveyed to me the said Francis Peabody a tract of land situated in Middleton aforesaid containing nine acres — together with the privilege of the stream which runs through the same to carry a mill by a deed hearing even date with this bond. Now if I the said Francis Peabody nor my heirs executors administrators nor assigns set up a Grist mill on the premises nor suffer one to be set up at or near the old Iron works dam to grind Corn or any other kind of grain then the foregoing bond is to be void, otherwise to remain in full force and virtue.

Francis Peabody

Peabody made a further purchase of a small piece of land from Israel Curtis on the following day (209-116). A later transfer of Curtis's property mentions that this lot had been sold to be used as a mill yard.

Francis Peabody was the third of the name in Middleton. He lived on East Street on the estate recently owned by Ralph H. Illingworth. After securing the land on Mill Street, he must have built his sawmill at once. A year later, December 31, 1816, we find him selling to his son Stephen for $100 his "saw mill with the land under and adjoining it which is the same land I purchased of Stephen Nichols and Israel Curtis" (212-233). Within two weeks, on January 11, 1817, Francis Peabody died. Apparently the venture was started for the benefit of his son.

Stephen Peabody ran this business successfully for more than twenty-five years. In 1820, on the sixteenth of August (224-105), he bought two and one-half acres of land near the mill pond. This lot was the site of a house that he built shortly afterwards. It was south of the brook on the east side of Mill Street and appears there in his name on the 1830 map of Middleton and thereafter.[7] The mill itself was north of the brook and dam. Parts of the iron gears have been found on the land of Louis A. Barett on Mill Terrace.

The account book of Joseph Towne of Middleton at the Essex Institute makes numerous references to services for Peabody's mill. On February 12, 1834, Towne charged $1.25 for drawing a load of lumber from the mill; on the eighth and nineteenth he drew ash logs to the mill; and on February 27 and 28 he took logs to the Peabody yard and carried plank home. He also charged seventy-five cents for a day's work by his son Lorenzo. On June sixteenth he mentions "fencing stuff." There are other similar entries from time to time, the last being March 8, 1843, when he charged for "a pair of oxen to Peabody's sawmill — 50 cents."

By 1841 Peabody seemed to be in need of funds. On March 29 of that year (232-217) he mortgaged to Gilbert Tapley of Danvers "a certain tract of land in Middleton containing about 11 acres — with a dwelling house, Barn & Saw Mill and other out buildings thereon." The bounds of the land are thus described:

> Beginning at the south corner of the premises by land of Joseph P. Gould; thence westerly by Gould to land of Joseph Peabody 3d at the head of the Pond; thence northerly across the Brook; thence easterly on several courses as the fence stands still by said Peabody's land to a stake and stones near the road; thence to Iron Works Bridge, so called; thence easterly by said Peabody's land to land of heirs of Joseph Nichols and others; thence southerly as the wall stands to first bounds, being the same that was purchased of Stephen Nichols and Israel Curtis. With all privileges and appurtenances.

Peabody rented his mill to Perley Tapley of Danvers on February 20, 1843. The original lease is in the files of the Middleton Historical Society. It conveyed

> my Sawmill situated in said Middleton with all the privileges and appurtenances thereunto belonging so far as is necessary for a mill yard to occupy and improve sd Mill.
>
> To have and to hold the same one year from the above named date. Furthermore the said Tapley doth agree to quit and deliver up at the end of said year and pay the rent of Eighty dollars together with all the chips made at the sd Mill during the term above named and the said Mill and Mill tools to be in as good order and condition as the same now is — the common wear and tear excepted and to pay the rent at the end of sd term and not suffer any strip or wast thereof and that the Lessor may enter to view and expel the Lessee if he shall make or suffer any strip or wast thereof.
>
> In witness thereof we the aforesaid parties have hereunto interchangeably set our hands and seal the year and day above written.

The clause about delivering the chips made at the mill has a certain interest in connection with an old-time custom. Chips were often used as a road surface. I have seen them put to the purpose in New Hampshire. Anyone who has driven a horse over such a road knows how soft it was for the horse's feet and how easily the carriage rolled along on the cushioned surface.

After raising money by several mortgages, Stephen Peabody sold the sawmill to his son Francis Peabody 3d. on November 4, 1844 (349-53). Francis was a shoemaker and he probably made no attempt to carry on the lumber business. He sold the mill, dwelling house, barn, and other buildings to Samuel Symonds of Danvers, May 6, 1847 (381-234). Symonds owned the property for seventeen years and presumably ran the mill. Both sawmill and house appear in his name on H. F. Walling's 1856 map of Essex County. It was eventually sold for $600 to Samuel A. Cummings, April 20, 1864 (666-180).

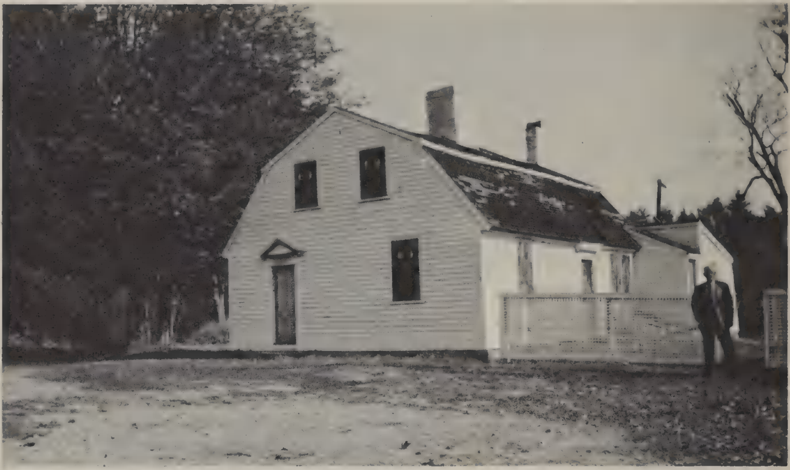
THE MILLS ON BOSTON BROOK

The first direct reference to a mill on Boston Brook that I have found appears in a sale of land from Philip Knight to Daniel and Jonathan Kenney of Boxford, July 10, 1717 (33-259). The land is described as being "not farr from Fullers and flints saw mill standing on Beach brook or near unto or adjoining to andover old roode." This is a somewhat puzzling statement, as Boston Brook is a winding stream and it ran near the old road at several points. It was tempting to believe that this might have been the original mill at the "mill path" bridge, but the fortunate discovery of a Fuller deed places it farther up stream.

Thomas Fuller, Sr., had given his son Jacob land in this area soon after his marriage in 1683. On September 10, 1715, Jacob conveyed to his son Edward a tract half a mile square at Little Beechy meadow, "with a Small Dwelling house thereon and a large new Frame of another house," the land bounding east upon Boxford line. Nothing is said about a mill, but, when Edward sold this farm of 160 acres, April 11, 1722, it contained a sawmill fallen down. The conveyance was made to John Berry of Wenham and reads in part:

> all the above 160 acres of Land & buildings together with all & Singular all the privilidges thereto belonging whatsoever with all mines mineralls water Courses Stream only reserving the Liberty or privilidge that my Honored father has granted or given in an Instrument bearing date of July the 20th 1704 — & also the one Quarter of all the Irons that is belonging to a Certain Saw mill falen downe upon sd Land & one halfe of a mill Saw only Excepting one Gogin (gudgeon) concerning the Irons to have use possess & Injoy free & Clear of all the above granted premises forever.

The Boxford line lay west of Liberty Street, and the mill stood north of School Street just west of the point where the brook turns northeast almost parallel with Liberty; This location where the rockwork of a dam may still be seen was verified by Arthur E. Curtis in 1965. Although the structure is not mentioned in Jacob Fuller's deed to his son, it seems un-



House of Nathaniel Peabody, one of early owners of the sawmill on nearby Boston Brook. Dismantled in 1950'S.

likely that a new sawmill built by Edward would have fallen down between 1715 and 1722. It was probably built by Jacob Fuller, who it will be remembered, inherited the saw and iron gearing from his father's mill in 1698, and who may have started this other enterprise soon afterwards. The 1704 instrument mentioned by Edward Fuller in his deed to Berry is not on record; it might throw some light on the matter.

The name Flint in this connection is more easily explained. Capt Thomas Flint was a millwright who helped to build the ironworks and who constructed mills on the Ipswich River at South Middleton. There is no evidence of his owning any part of this Fuller mill.

The first mill at the Mill Street bridge was always owned by the Peabody family. Joseph Peabody, a wheelwright, who lived in the village of Boxford, purchased land on Boston Brook as early as May 24, 1693. One tract he acquired from Thomas Cave (9-130) and another he obtained by an unrecorded deed from Joseph Whipple. The first piece lay along Beech Brook, running from the Ipswich River northwest as far as the Corwin line and then back to the river at the southeasterly end; the Whipple purchase ran more to the eastward and then up the river as far as Beech Brook.

Peabody's son Joseph, a carpenter, must have built the mill. He was apparently living on this land soon after his marriage to Mary Symonds in 1693/4, but his father did not give him title to it until May 9, 1712/13, about two years before Joseph, Jr., died. Four of Joseph's six children were sons: Samuel, Joseph, Zerubabel, and Nathaniel. They must have managed to keep the mill going, for in 1729 it is mentioned in a Middleton town record as Peabody's sawmill. In a report of the selectmen concerning the laying out of roads, dated May 18, this passage occurs: "to another way to begin by a gate near Sarg Samuel Symonds his House and thenc as the way now gos to Peabodys Sawmill and from thenc over the bridge on beche Brook to a gate towards the ironworks," etc. A deed from Bray Wilkins to Israel Wilkins, March 11, 1734 (79-43), also mentions a "Cartway that leads to the Saw mill."

This business was always a family affair, and there are few records to show the actual ownership. Zerubabel and Nathaniel Peabody, the younger sons, seem to have come into possession of it. At the time of his death in 1781, Zerubabel was in good circumstances. He owned 260 acres of land with three dwelling houses, two barns, half a cider mill, and half a sawmill. He had two sons — Andrew, born in 1745, and Joseph (known as Joseph 2d.), born in 1747. They inherited half of the mill.

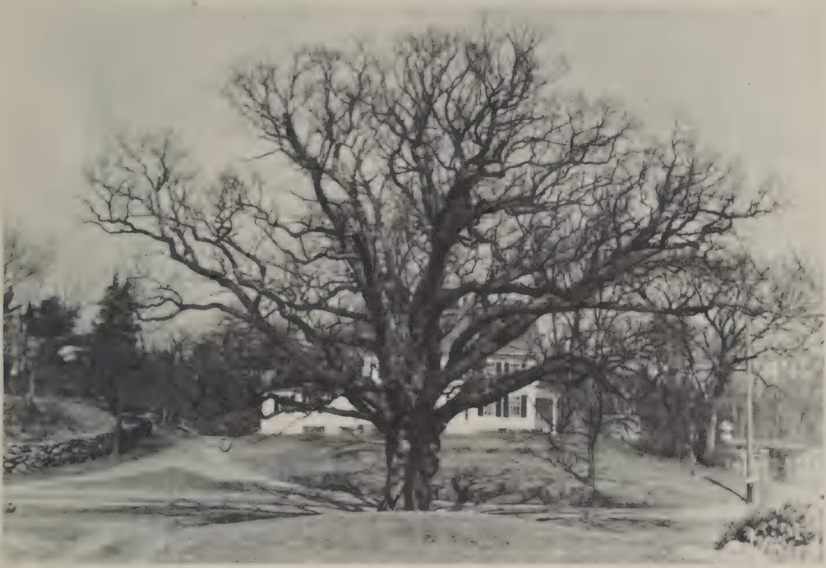
Nathaniel in deeds is called a cordwainer, but he, too, was a proprietor of the sawmill. His sons Thomas and Joseph carried on the business, perhaps with their cousins Andrew and Joseph. Nathaniel Peabody built the small gambrel-roofed house that formerly stood on the corner of Mill and Peabody Streets. This little dwelling was partly burned in the early 1950's. Later it was dismantled, moved to Carlisle, Massachusetts, and reconstructed. Nathaniel also built for his elder son Thomas the house on Peabody Street now owned by the heirs of Ernest A. Curtis. In his will, dated January 28, 1784, Nathaniel left this house to Thomas, while to Joseph he gave the Mill Street home. To each he left half of the sawmill. We must conclude that this bequest was only one half of his right in the mill, since a later inventory shows that he himself owned only half of it.

A tragedy unparalleled in the quiet affairs of Middleton occurred in the Peabody sawmill in 1787. According to local tradition, the brothers Joseph and Thomas were quarrelsome, and one day when they were alone in the mill they got into a violent argument. In the heat of anger Joseph seized a crowbar and threw it at Thomas. Felled by the blow, Thomas died shortly afterwards. Joseph apparently was not charged with murder. His father, at least, seemed to be satisfied that he was innocent of any evil intention. He made a new will, by which Joseph was to share as before, while Thomas's sons David and Samuel were to have their father's house and his part of the mill. These grandsons lived on Thomas's farm, but never ran the mill.

Nathaniel Peabody died in 1796, when he was eighty-six years of age. After his demise Joseph carried on the enterprise for a time with his cousins Andrew and Joseph, 2d. In 1798, when the state lising of estates was made, they were the joint owners of "an Old Saw Mille," described as being forty feet long, twelve feet wide, and worth only twenty-six dollars. The business could not have been an active one after that; in any event, not for long. When Andrew Peabody died in 1813, there was no mention of the mill in the inventory of his property.

AVERILL'S GRIST MILL

For a short time in the 1830's a grist mill was operated on Boston (Beechy) Brook on the site of the old Peabody sawmill. Benjamin Averill, who called himself a cordwainer, or shoemaker, was the miller. He had married Hannah Peabody, sister of Andrew and Joseph, 2d., and they lived in a homestead on the old town road leading east from the bridge and north of the farm formerly owned by Ernest Curtis. Not much is known about this venture. A deed from David Peabody to Samuel Symonds, dated May 13, 1834 (275-272), mentions Averill's mill as a boundary. A description of the mill is found in Book IV of the town records, where mortgages of personal property are recorded, in an entry dated October 4, 1838:



400 year old oak tree and house of Curtis Brothers. Built by Nathaniel Peabody for his son, Thomas C., 1760.

Benjamin Averill of Middleton cordwainer for $341.82 paid by Benjamin Averill, Jr., of Middleton, cordwainer — "all that grist mill of mine which is a wooden building with one run of stones & stands on land of Joseph Peabody 2d in said Middleton together with all wheels gearings & all other things belonging to me & used in said mill or connected therewith."

This was to be paid in five years with interest.

On the same day Averill transferred his house and land (308-230) to his son for $341.82, as in the above mortgage. This deed conveyed "All my interest in & to that homestead on which I now reside in Middleton consisting of a Dwelling house and out houses and about eight acres of land under and adjoining the same." The property was bounded on the south by land of Benjamin, Jr., and David Peabody; westerly and northerly by Averill's own land; and on the east by Joseph Symonds. "Said lot was set off to my wife Hannah as her third part of her late father Andrew Peabody's estate."

EDWARD WILKINS'S MILL ON BOSTON BROOK

The 1856 map of Essex County gives no indication of a mill on Boston Brook. The dam was still there, however, and soon after the Civil War a new sawmill was to rise on the site of the old one. It was then the property of two brothers, Edward Wilberforce and Adrian Wilkins, sons of James Wilkins, whose house, now owned by George W. Smith, still stands at the extreme end of Mill Street. Their venture was not very successful financially, but the strong character of Edward Wilkins and the way in which he overcame his difficulties makes their story an interesting one.

In 1865 Edward Wilkins, in company with Jesse W. Peabody, a brother of Mrs. Benjamin Averill, acquired large land holdings in the area surrounding the brook and mill site (680-291). Peabody soon sold out his interest to Wilkins. Adrian Wilkins also had forty acres or more of tillage, pasture, and woodland, and he and Edward then joined forces.

Although there were other brothers and sisters in the family, the father, James, turned to Edward in his old age, giving him all his estate, including the dwelling house and personal property and ninety-two acres of farm land. By this deed (812-263) he bound his son to care for him and his wife as long as they might live, "in a manner that shall be in every respect proper and suitable for persons of our age and situation and circumstances in life." Edward also had to agree never to mortgage any part of the property during his parents' lifetime. Perhaps as a consequence of this involvement Edward Wilkins never married.

The brothers ran the mill together for a few years, but on February 23, 1871, Adrian sold his undivided half and all his land to his father-in-law Adrian Putnam (823-45). Meantime, on February 22, 1869, Edward had conveyed to Adrian's wife an acre of land with buildings which stood across the river from the sawmill. Two years later she sold this house and land to Thomas S. Pfeffer (Pepper) of Salem for $1080. The Pepper house, now so pleasantly situated on the Curtis mill pond, was afterwards occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Albert C. Murray.

Edward Wilkins bought back his brother's half of the mill and lands, May 1, 1874, thereby coming into possession of a large estate. That he was unable to succeed in the mill business was probably the result of the general financial depression in the 1870's. He was obliged to mortgage one thing after another — first to Adrian Putnam, and then to the Danvers Savings Bank, when on October 5, 1874, he raised $2500 on all his lands (914-249). In the same month (926-230), the bank loaned him a further $2000, and in 1879 he gave a mortgage to Joseph Averill on the "Case farm" (his father's land) and another lot, by which he secured $1000, although both were already heavily mortgaged. He was unable to meet his interest payments, and the bank was obliged to foreclose. The property, sold at auction August 3, 1880, went to John S. Porter for $800.

At this point Edward Wilkins declared that he would pay his debts if it took him the rest of his life. This he was able to do within twenty years. Just how long he continued to run the mill is uncertain. The building was still there in 1884, as shown by the map of Middleton in Beers' *Atlas* of that year. Before 1895 it was torn down or had disappeared. The James Wilkins house was still held by the bank in 1884.

It is unlikely that Wilkins continued the lumber business, but it is comforting to know that he eventually acquired a substantial fortune. When he died in 1922, he was worth nearly $30,000, most of which went to American and foreign missions. Long a deacon of the Congregational Church, he is remembered to this day as a fine gentleman and a man of integrity.

THE PERKINS SAWMILL

In 1744 there was a sawmill on a stream running into Boston Brook from the west under what is now Essex Street. The dam and mill pond are still there west of the road. A town record dated June 13, 1744, shows that Joseph Frye, who lived in the old house now occupied by John Muzichuk on Route 114 near the Andover line, petitioned the town to have a road laid out from his house to the Andover road (Essex Street) "through

Capt. Timothy Perkins Land to the road near the saw mill Late erected." The record reports that the road had been laid out "as the way hath usually or formerly goon; near the meadow or swamp or sawmill Pond," and through Perkin's pasture.

Timothy Perkins lived in a house now owned by Mr. and Mrs. James J. Storrow. The 1744 road runs north of the house and is still passable for walking, riding, or for farm vehicles.

THE SYMONDS MILL

Reference has already been made to the account book of Joseph Towne, who hauled lumber and planks to and from Stephen Peabody's mill. During part of the same period in the 1830's he also notes similar labor in connection with a Symonds mill. The first instance where he mentions it by name occurs July 4, 1833, but there are similar entries in the next three years, the last being June 30, 1836. On one occasion he drew "fencing stuff" from the Symonds mill and now and then he charged for the use of his oxen or the labor of his son Lorenzo.

The Symonds family lived in the house north of Peabody Street now the home of Henry Sawyer. The house was built by Joseph Symonds in 1792, soon after his marriage to Sarah Peabody. Leading north from the homestead to Bald Hill there was and still is a logging road. A mill pond and dam just off this road testify to the activities of former owners. I believe this was the site of the Symonds mill.

Deacon Joseph Symonds died December 6, 1831. That he had been concerned with the operation of a sawmill is shown in the inventory of his possessions taken May 15, 1832, which lists a mill saw worth four dollars. Another almost illegible item seems to be "plank" and other "stuff (a former term for prepared timber) valued at $125. He was also equipped with four yokes of oxen, a timber chain, four draft chaines, and six small ones — all suggestive of lumbering operations.

Symonds had two sons — Samuel, born in 1792, and Joseph, born in 1805. In 1834 Samuel Symonds was a butcher, living in Danvers. It seems evident that the younger son, Joseph, must have been carrying on the mill at this time. Corroborating this probability is a receipted bill from Joseph Symonds to Solomon Wilkins, which is among the manuscripts gathered by Mrs. Martha J. Averill of Middleton, now in the Essex Institute. It is dated 1832. Symonds charged for sawing on April 25 and again on May 5, when he turned out 272 feet of boards at thirty cents a hundred.

On December 20, 1839, Joseph Symonds sold a dwelling house and a small piece of land in Middleton to John Symonds. He was then of Newton and he again appears as a resident of that town, February 15, 1840, when he mortgaged his father's farm for $2500 to his brother Samuel. Besides one hundred acres with buildings, this deed included a fifty-six acre tract and also the "Bald Hill Lot," which lay partly in Middleton and partly in Boxford.

How long the mill had been running during the life of Deacon Joseph we do not know, but its existence came to an end before 1839.

MILLS ON THE IPSWICH RIVER

Since all the small streams in Middleton turned mill wheels at one time or another, one may well wonder why the Ipswich River was not so utilized to a greater degree. After one early and abortive attempt, only one location on the river proved continuously successful. The reason for not employing the larger source of water power was that in its course through Middleton it had no falls. It also had widesperad flooding in the spring and at some points only a few inches of water in the summer.

One of the earliest efforts to establish a mill on the river took place soon after June 4, 1696, when Samuel Symonds, Sr., of Boxford, John Towne and Jacob Towne, Jr., and John, Nathaniel, and Job Averill of Topsfield purchased from Thomas Putnam of Salem eight acres of upland, swamp, and meadow on both sides of the river (33-174). They paid fifteen pounds for this land and, according to the deed, were already "owners of the new mill on Ipswich River." Known as the mill lot, it was still so called in 1830, appearing on the town map at the southwest corner of Stephen Peabody's land on what is now East Street.

The little that is known about this mill may be gleaned from the Averill genealogy.[8] William Averill, of the second generation, lived in Topsfield and was a carpenter. His sons John and Job were farmers, but Nathaniel was a millwright; he presumably was responsible for the building. A division of William Averill's estate among his six sons was made on February 4, 1701/2. Job received a share of his father's land as well as other lands purchased after William's decease, he paying fifty pounds with interest. Along with the land went "the grist mill that is the right which belongs to us and the house and barne which said lands are scituate upon the north and South sides of the River called Ipswich River." Since a right in the grist mill is indicated as belonging "to us," we may know that someone outside the family also had an interest in it, and may safely conclude that this was the mill bought in 1696.

In 1702 Samuel Symonds and Job Averill were the sole owners, when, on November 12 (21-106), they sold to Edward Putnam the eight acres "formerly bought of Thomas Putnam."

In contrast to this brief venture we have a history of nearly three hundred years of successful use of the Ipswich River at the site now occupied by the United Shoe Machinery Company on Boston Street in the extreme southwesterly part of the town. From about 1675 to the present day a continuous succession of industries has flourished at this point. Although water power is no longer needed, the mill dam still stands in approximately its original location on a spot as historical as anything Middleton has to offer.

The account of these mills is somewhat complicated by the fact that the site was originally "within Reading bounds," and that the land to the east of it and north of the river was at first a part of Salem, but became Danvers and later Peabody. The early mill owners often had their farms in one county and their mills in the other.

So it happened that John Phelps, on September 24, 1674, bought the land where the present industry stands as part of a 122-acre farm in Reading. Five years later, the Salem men who determined the town bounds used as a marker "a small white Oake by the side of the Ipswich river, about three or Four score pole above the Sawmill against [opposite] John Phelps his house."[9] Phelps, therefore, had built a sawmill before April 1679. When he died in 1685, he owned only part of a mill, but his share was worth fifty pounds, a considerable value for those days.

Not long after this there was a fulling mill on Ipswich River "near John Phelps," and one John McCarty of Salem had a right in it, which he gave to his son Peter, January 4, 1702 (15-147). John Buxton was probably the proprietor of this enterprise, as we find from a later record that he owned a half part of the dam that "he reserved for his fulling mill." Fulling was the cleansing and finishing of wool cloth, at that time woven in the home. The operation of such an industry was a significant example of the independent spirit of the Essex County settlers, who were trying to establish their own manufactures. In 1724 Buxton's son John sold his father's interest in this mill to Ezekiel Upton (43-124) with the privilege of building a fulling mill in any convenient place on Buxton's land. So it appears that fulling was carried on as a trade there for some years.

According to Henry Wheatland, speaking at a field meeting of the Essex Institute in this part of Middleton, August 5, 1869, a mill in this place was known as "Upton's mill" as early as 1709.[10] Professor Wheatland was correct in this statement, for John and Ezekiel Upton, both members of the Salem Village church, were each rated there for a mill in 1704.

John Buxton, Sr., dying in 1715, left his "mills" to his sons Joseph and Andrew, but neither son seems to have run them. Years later the mill irons or gear belonged to their brother John. Meantime John Upton had acquired a quarter interest in the grist mill on Ipswich River; this he gave to his son John in 1721. It seems clear that the Phelpses, Buxtons, and Uptons were the men who were responsible for the three mills, and their names keep appearing as shareholders. The younger John Phelps, for instance, inherited a one-quarter part of the corn mill in 1722. This was set off to his widow Elizabeth in 1731, although John Upton still had his share and was actually the miller. In the final settlement of the Phelps estate, May 26, 1732, account was made of "another fourth part of said Stream belonging to said Estate — which for some time past has been improved by Mr. John Upton." In June 1752, Upton was living in Lynn and he then relinquished to Nathaniel Phelps for £13. 10/ his "Right, Title and Interest in the old River mill called Buxtons mill — that is to say all my right that was my hon'd Fathers John Upton late of Lynn dec'd in said Mill Stream Mill Irons and priviledges thereunto belonging."[11]

The simple ways of doing business in the eighteenth century, which sometimes seem amusing in comparison with the intricate systems of today, are illustrated in a conveyance (102-134) made by a later Buxton (Timothy) to Nathaniel Phelps on August 9, 1750. By this paper he transferred a one-twenty-fourth part of the corn mill. One may well wonder how such a division could be made. It merely meant that Phelps would be permitted the use of the mill for his own grinding "one day in four wekes out of the said Buxton's part of the mill."

In 1757 an important change of ownership took place when, on November 5, Timothy Buxton, miller, deeded to John Flint "the one half of a Corn mill by the name of Buxton's mill — it being the whole of said Buxton's Right of Lands and Buildings in Reading, Middleton, and Danvers" (107-118). The new owner, known as "Deacon John," had built in 1746 the large white house still standing at the corner of Boston and River Streets now occupied by Harry R. Woodward and his daughter Carol. This is opposite the little road leading to the north end of the dam. The Flint family, from whom Mrs. Woodward (Bertha Flint) was descended, has long owned tremendous acreage in the vicinity, and it is virtually certain that John's father, Capt. Thomas, millwright and carpenter, constructed some of the various buildings on the river. In fact, he left a sawmill and land on the north side of the Ipswich River adjoining John Phelps's land to his sons Thomas and Samuel when he died in 1721. Samuel apparently made no use of the inheritance, but his brother Thomas did. Before his death in 1757, he bequeathed his "part of the sawmill" to his son Elisha.

Deacon Flint was Elisha's cousin. On October 27, 1761 (113-224), he bought Elisha's half of the sawmill with two acres of land bounding east and north on the highway, south on Ipswich River, and west on land of Nathaniel Phelps. Ten years later, January 8, 1771 (128-274) he acquired the other half of the grist mill from Nathaniel Phelps for £333. 6. 8, and when he died in 1780, he was the sole owner of the properties, which were known henceforth as "Flint's mills."

John left these enterprises to his sons Jeremiah and John, and again they were divided. For mutual protection, the brothers gave each other reciprocal deeds of their shares in the lands and buildings. At this point a new picture appears. The sawmill of this period did not stand by the river dam, but was on a stream now diverted through the Woodwards' land, which then ran into the river opposite the Flint homestead. It may be remarked that sawmills were not built in a very substantial manner and were probably replaced or relocated from time to time. In these documents, dated December 8, 1781, the new location of the sawmill is clear. In the deed from Jeremiah to John (142-319) the sawmill land is described as "beginning on the west side of the bridge over the saw mill brook; thence running as the Stream runs through the Saw Mill; thence as the wall stands about ten rods southwestwardly; thence as the wall stands southwardly to Ipswich River." Of the grist mill the document says: "likewise one half of the Corn Mill the Stream and the Dam and all the priviledges thereunto belonging reserving to myself a right to pass in the usual way to and from the Corn mill and likewise to and from the Saw Mill to bring Loggs and carry off stuff as may be necessary." The deed from John to Jeremiah (142-321) mentions half the corn mill and its privileges and describes the two or three acres of the sawmill land thus:

> Beginning at the bridge in the road above the Saw Mill; thence running with the Stream or ditch through the Saw Mill to a wall upon the other side; thence running with said wall twelve or fifteen rods to a Corner; thence Southwardly as the wall now stands to Ipswich River; thence as the river runs to the bridge over it; thence as the road goes up to the first bounds, together with the shop standing thereon. Reserving a right to pass and repass to and from the Corn Mill through said land the usual way. Also one halfe of the Saw Mill with all the Tools and priviledges thereunto belonging Reserveing to myself the priviledge of improving the yard at the east end of said mill as need may require.

It is interesting to note that the shop mentioned here is still standing on Boston Street opposite the Flint homestead. It may originally have been an office. In the mid-nineteenth century it was used by later Flints as a shoe shop and at one time was fitted up for use as a private school room. The blackboards are even now in place, as they were when Miss Fannie Flint taught her scholars there about 1880. Behind the building a stone wall shores up a deep gully where the old stream ran.

The Flint brothers were joint owners for many years. In the state list of lands and buildings of 1798, their corn mill is described as being twenty-five feet square with two pairs of stones and valued at $600; the sawmill, thirty-nine feet long and eleven feet wide, with one saw, was worth $200. Lieut. John, as he was called after the Revolution, died December 6, 1802, at the age of forty-six, leaving Jeremiah to carry on the business. This he did for the benefit of John's family and his own, but he was no business man, and, when he died in 1818, his whole estate had to be sold at public vendue. His son John managed to recover rights in the property from the various heirs, but it is unlikely that the mills were operated after the death of Jeremiah.

The event that spelled finis to these old-time industries occurred February 25, 1832, when John Flint sold the mills with five acres of land and water rights to Francis Peabody of Salem (264-59). The buyer, son of Joseph Peabody, prosperous shipping master, was himself hardly less well known than his father. He was already refining whale oil and manufacturing candles. He now established a paper mill where the old buildings had stood. This he sold in 1843 (340-250) to Zenas and Luther Crane, the forerunners of the present makers of Crane papers. This site on the river has been a seat of industry ever since.

CHAPTER III NOTES

1. This map, drawn in 1866, appears as the frontispiece in Charles W. Upham's *Salem Witchcraft.*
2. David Stiles, "Middleton," in *History of Essex County, Massachusetts,* D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., Philadelphia, 1888.
3. Benjamin Peabody, *Account Book.* Copies in Essex Institute and Middleton Historical Society.
4. The gudgeon was the metal end of the shaft. A wedge was a temporary expedient to make a tight fit when the shaft had rotted or was worn down.
5. *Proceedings of the Essex Institute,* 1862, II, 380.
6. Middlesex County Deeds, Book V, Leaf 45.
7. Map surveyed for the selectmen by Moses Dorman, 1830.
8. Clara A. Avery, *The Averell, Averill, Avery Family,* I, 92. 93.
9. "Salem Town Records," *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* XLIX, 79, January 1913).
10. *Bulletin of the Essex Institute,* I, 100 (July-August, 1869).
11. Middlesex County Deeds, Book LII, Leaf 48.

CHAPTER IV

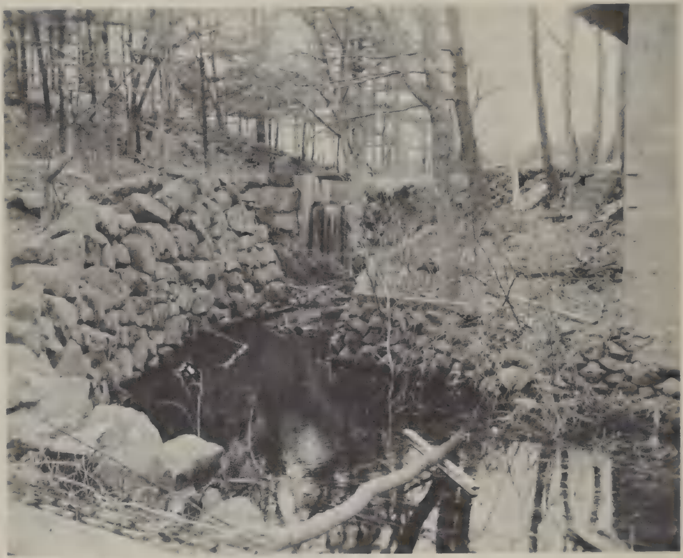
The Ironworks

Considering the extensive preservation of historical material in Essex County and the minutely detailed accounts in its local histories, it would seem as if that area could not hold any surprises. But all sorts of exciting things, not so much in the field of political events as in the everyday life of the people, have happened there and been forgotten. This is particularly true of Middleton.

The people of Middleton were known in Salem as "the farmers," and so they were on a generous scale, with homesteads of hundreds of acres. In addition to their pursuit of agriculture, they practiced every trade known to a civilized community and, as we have seen, ran mills on every stream.

In 1700, only forty years past the first settler stage, the village lay almost hidden in the virgin forest. The Ipswich River, fed by numerous rushing brooks, wound through and about it. There were no real roads, only Indian trails or such paths as a man might follow on horseback or with a cart.

The earliest arrivals were familiar with the remarkable iron industry on the Saugus River. While they worked at lumbering and making barrel staves and clapboards their minds were fixed hopefully on the discovery of iron ore. Bray Wilkins had bought his holdings from Governor Bellingham with the express understanding that if iron ore were found on the land, he would pay a further compensation annually. A few years later a blacksmith, Thomas Fuller, was invited to come from Woburn, with, it is said, the idea of running an ironworks. This he never did, but he and his several sons saw to it that such bar iron as could be found in the vicinity was converted into tools and plowshares. Fuller got some of his iron from Boxford (Rowley Village), where the Leonards, who had



Sluiceway of Middleton ironworks, Mill Street, 1708-1793. Large boulders indicate that it is the original structure.

been employed at Saugus, were in charge of the actual production in a venture plagued by fires and lawsuits that was carried on fitfully during the 1670's.

There appears to have been no other such activity of importance in the seventeenth century, but in 1708 the business of refining iron began again in the part of Boxford that later became Middleton. It is strange that an industry which was certainly outside the ken of simple farmers should nevertheless have been founded by husbandmen and carried on without a break for over seventy years.

On June 8, 1708, Francis Eliot of Boxford, a yeoman, conveyed for four shillings to Thomas Flint, Sr., and Thomas Flint, Jr., both of Salem, John How of Boxford, and Thomas Cave, Jr., of Topsfield, "so much of my land and water courses as shall be needed or anyways necessary for the abovesd . . . to set their Damm on for their Iron work and also to flow with water so much of my land adjoyning to their pond as they shall need for the benefit of their Iron works or water works and that from time to time so long as they shall keep said works up or in repair."

All of these men lived within the present bounds of Middleton. Francis Eliot's land extended south and southwest of the proposed site to his home near the corner of what is now Liberty and Maple Streets. John How was the son of Capt. John How, who had been concerned in the earlier Boxford works, and he was a brother-in-law of Thomas Cave, whose sister Sarah he had married in 1697. He too had a large farm on Liberty Street, but much farther north. Cave lived in what was then the southern part of Topsfield. Both he and How acquired further acreage near the ironworks. The Flints had very extensive holdings — as much as one thousand acres at one time, it is said — in the western part of town, both in Salem Village and in Reading.

Capt. Thomas Flint, the father, was a millwright and may have been the instigator of the scheme. Undoubtely he built the dam and the sluiceway of great stones which is still in place. We may suppose, however, that he had the assistance of the other proprietors. The ironworks was situated on the south side of Pout Pond Brook, just west of the point where the stream runs under Mill Street. The pond created by the building of the dam is still a sizeable body of water.

The brook was called the "Ironworks Brook" as early as February, 1712. Just when the first buildings were erected we do not know, but they are referred to in a deed July 19, 1715. Before that time other figures had entered the picture. Deacon Edward Putnam, Sr., and his son Edward became shareholders, and they, with Thomas Cave, later built the "New house — for Coal," and "the house where the Chimney is," later noted in the deacon's will. In a deed in 1731 Putnam says that he bought a one-sixth share from Capt. Thomas Flint. It seems likely that Capt. Flint at the outset had a one-half interest in the enterprise, for, when he died on May 24, 1721, he left "all my shares in the Iron works" to his sons Thomas and Samuel. This bequest appears in a codicil to his will written two days before his death.

Flint may have had some experience as a very young man (he was born in 1650) at the Saugus works. He was at least acquainted with Samuel Jenks, who sold him a piece of salt marsh. Flint was the only person in the Middleton company who could have had pratical knowledge of the kind.

In 1724, then, the company consisted of Thomas and Samuel Flint, the two Putnams, How, and Cave. How's name does not appear after the first organization and he may have disposed of his shares. The Flints also cannot be traced as owners thereafter. Somewhat later we find that Francis Eliot was a proprietor and he may have been so from the beginning. His generosity in selling a mill privilege for four shillings may be thus explained. After his death in 1739, an inventory of his possessions mentions:

To Part of an Iron Works	40 - 00 - 00
To Iron Bars & a Scieth & Scieth Tackling	4 - 10 - 00
To Four hundred of new Iron	16 - 00 - 00

Daniel Kenney was probably another early proprietor, for his land adjoined the site of the works. He had acquired property in the vicinity as early as 1704 and in 1720 became the sole owner of the house and farm which had previously belonged to his brother Jonathan. Kenney was a mason. On October 25, 1744, he sold his one-sixth share to his son Israel, who was a blacksmith. When Israel died three years later, his inventory, dated June 20, 1747, mentions "One Sixth part of an Iron mill 7:10:0."

The ironworks in Middleton was situated not far from Pout Pond meadow — an area of low land lying along the brook, where almost everyone in town had some rights for the purpose of cutting turf, or peat. It was the kind of terrain where bog iron could be dug, and the evidence indicates that the company did not have to seek further for their supply of "mine." Some years ago, when the pond was drained, Arthur E. Curtis noticed that the bottom was deeply pitted, as if digging had been done there. The area is now rather thickly wooded, but no doubt in the days of ironworking it was deforested in order to make the tremendous quantities of charcoal that were necessary for the forge.

This works was operated simply as a bloomery, i.e., it prepared iron by the direct process. The bog iron was pounded by a triphammer into blooms, or round batches, and then submitted to intense heat in the forge until impurities were eliminated. It was then hammered by hand into bars convenient for blacksmiths' use.

This operation required special skill and knowledge beyond that of the ordinary blacksmith, so it is not surprising to find that the first bloomer whose name occurs in records was a complete stranger in town. In fact, he is still a stranger, for extensive research has told us little about him. He first appears June 1, 1731, when Edward Putnam, Sr., sold to "Joseph Steel, now Residing in Middleton, a Bloomer, and Timothy Fuller of Middleton, yeoman, for £30, All my Sixth Part of the Iron Works now standing in Middleton abovesd on the Brook called Pout-Pond-Brook. That is The part which I bought of Capt. Thomas Flint And the above named Joseph Steel and Timothy Fuller, to pay all the Damage that shall arise by Flowing, according to what shall be laid upon sd works, in proportion with the rest of the Owners of sd. works And the Rent that is due to Thomas Cave, my sixth part of all that is to be paid to Him and others. And the abovesd Edward Putnam Senr to Give all my Right Title and Interest, being one sixth part of the Works, House, hamer, Anvil, and Bellows and all other Utensils, with the sixth part of the Stream and Lands and all priviledges and Appurtenances thereto beloging or anyways appertaining in Partnership with the Partners thereto belonging."

This was the prelude to an event that occurred on August 2 of the same year, when Steel married Sarah Putnam, daughter of Edward, Jr. In the following year he was of Rowley, and still called "bloomer," when, on May 6, he sold his newly acquired twelfth part of the ironworks back to his father-in-law. In 1735 Steel and his wife were back in Middleton, where four of their children were born between 1735 and 1745. Since this man was so closely connected with the works, it seems evident that he was conducting the bloomery during this decade and perhaps earlier. Steel is buried in Mont Vernon, New Hampshire, a community largely settled by people from Middleton.

Up to this time, records contain little information about the operation or relative success of the enterprise. One little item was gleaned some sixty years ago by George Francis Dow, who headed it, "The Bursting of the Dam at the Boxford Iron Works." It was a paragraph from the *Boston News Letter* of October 1, 1725:

"The foregoing Account demonstrates that Water is a bad master and brings to remembrance the Vanity and Vexation of the Spirit with which the Owners of the Iron Works at Topsfield were exercised. They made a strong Dam to dispose of the Water for their Service. But it pass'd over the firm land beside the Dam which was not discerned, or not seasonably guarded against; Presently after, it insinuated itself under the Turff, and then it rushed with such Violence as to throw down the Trees, and conquer all oposition; it quickly forced a large & deep Channel. And the Owners were put to sore travel of making a second Dam, or else the first tho' standing, had stood to no purpose."

The writer was incorrect in saying that the ironworks was in Topsfield — there was nothing of the kind there in 1725 — but Mr. Dow was right in calling it the Boxford ironworks, as it was until 1728.

Isaac Kenney and his younger brother Israel, born in 1712, both of whom were blacksmiths, were no doubt active in the practical business of the manufacture. Isaac learned the art of blooming and took over when Steel left off. He was called "bloomer" when he signed a note as security for Israel on February 25, 1746. Isaac Kenney lived on the old farm deeded to him by his father, Daniel, in 1735, the father keeping half the house, barn, and orchard during his lifetime. This house was built before 1720, when Daniel took title to it. When Isaac died in 1798, he was living in the house shown on page 28. It was intended to accommodate two families as was the first homestead, and may or may not be the original structure. Known locally as the "old Kinney house," it burned to the ground in the 1920's.

In 1734 Edward Putnam, Jr., sold to Thomas Cave an acre and a half of land and his "one sixth part of an Iron Works standing on the forsaid pout pond brook. Also One Sixth part of the Sream Hammer Anvil & Bellows with the Sixth part of all the utensils belonging to the sd Iron works." On December 12, 1736, Edward Putnam, (probably Edward, Jr.) conveyed thirteen acres of land on the East or Southwardly side of Pout Pond Brook near the Iron works" to Edward Nichols for £110. With this land he sold one-twelfth part of the works with all equipment, tools, and the materials "for the Use of sd Works with one twelfth part of the Work house and a Coal House which was Ezra Putnam's. This appears to be the share that Putnam bought of Joseph Steel.

Ezra Putnam was Edward Jr.'s brother. His father, in a will dated March 11, 1731, devised to him, "my share in the Iron works and that New house that I built for coal. I also give him my share of that house where the Chimney is That I and Thomas Cave & my son Edward built." Deacon Putnam did not die until 1748. Meantime, three months after writing the will, he had sold his sixth share to Fuller and Steel. It is not clear how Ezra obtained his title to a share.

Edward Nichols was a miller who operated a gristmill farther up the stream, where Liberty Street now crosses it. He had, of course, dammed the brook, and that led to the necessity of an agreemnt with the proprietors of the ironworks. The deposition of Joseph Knight concerning this agreement has already been given in the account of Nichols's mill.

Records show little about what occurred at the works during the next twenty-two years, but there is no question that it was in operation. Tradition says that it was run by Thomas Cave and the Kenneys, and for once tradition seems to be right. Israel Kenney died in 1747, leaving his share to his infant son Israel. Whether Isaac Kenney owned an interest at this time is uncertain. The Putnams and other early proprietors were out of it by then, and it is probable that Thomas Cave gradually acquired the shares of Nichols and Eliot, until in 1760 he was to all intents and purposes the sole owner, with Isaac Kenney and his young sons, Asa and Simeon, running the works. Timothy Fuller alone never relinquished his rights in the business.

On March 15, 1760, Thomas Cave, who was then eighty years old, sold the works with ten acres of land to Kenney. I quote the deed almost in full, as it determines the exact location of the ironworks.

> I Thomas Cave of Middleton . . . yeoman, for and in consideration of one hundred and thirty-three pounds, six shillings and eight pence Lawfull Money to me in hand well and Truly Paid by Isaac Kenny of the same Town County and Province aforesaid Bloomer . . . have bargained and Sold . . . and forever confairm unto him the said Isaac Kenney . . . a Sartain Peace or Parscell of Upland medow and Swamp Land containing by Estimation about Teen Akers . . . in Middleton . . . bounded as followeth beginning at a Stake and Stons aboute it and standing by the Brige on the South Side of a Brook known by the name of Poute Pond Brook near the Iron works & frome said bounds westerly to the Ende of a Stone waall Standing on the South side of the Iron works and by the Land of Bengam Nickols thence Southwesterly as the waall now stands to a Wallnut Tree Marked by the Land of the said Nickils thence Northly and Westaly by the Land of Bengamin Nickols to the Upland of the said Cave to the North ende of the Iron works Dame thence East about three Poles to a Stake and Stons thene Southwardly by the Rode to the . . . bounds first mensied. Likewise an Iron works standing on the said Premises.

From this time on the enterprise was in the hands of the Kenneys. Isaac was then fifty-five years old. He was evidently a husky man, as might be expected of one accustomed to such hard labor; it was more than thirty years later, when he was eighty-six, that he thought of making a will, and he lived for five years after that. It is quite possible that he pursued his activities until he was well past seventy. Assuming that he was able to do so until he was seventy-five, we may reasonably deduce that the Middleton ironworks was in operation up to 1780, or more than seventy years. Asa and Simeon Kenney were always termed "blacksmiths" and there is no indication that they kept the refinery going, although they may have done so.

When Isaac Kenney made his will, November 28, 1793, he devised to his son Simeon all his real estate and buildings in Middleton and Andover and "Land at the eastward," wearing apparel, farming utensils, pew in the northeast corner of the meetinghouse, and "all my Right and Title to the Ironworks in Middleton if not sold before."

Obviously the ironworks buildings were still standing in 1793. They were not sold by Isaac. By that time, no doubt they were in a dilapidated condition and ready to collapse. By 1797 they had done so. The inventory of Timothy Fuller mentions under date of January 2, 1797, " Privilege in the Stream where the Ironworks formerly stood a hammer and Anvil $5."

Isaac Kenney died in the following year, and the history of the industry would seem to be concluded. But, like a ghost, a little story has come down to us. In 1891, Mrs. Martha J. Averill, of Middleton, a meticulous investigator, interviewed an old man named Andrew Gould, who was a nephew of Thomas Cave's grandson, Sylvester. Gould told her that when he was fourteen years old (1820), Sylvester Cave sold the anvil and the triphammer of the ironworks to a peddler for some pots and pans. Cave was never well off and was supported by the town in his later years. One can picture him rummaging in the debris of the old works in the hope of finding something salable. Apparently he had no idea of the value of so many hundreds of pounds of iron.

Andrew Gould raised another ghost in the form of a dog — a dog that had been trained to go after cider for the relief of the thirsty ironworkers.

The disappearance of the triphammer makes it unlikely that any excavation that might be undertaken along Pout Pond Brook would reveal anything of interest. Slag is still plentiful near the present dam — in fact, it seems to have been used as a fill for it. The curved spillway, built of very large stones or boulders, is thought to be a part of the original structure and has a side channel for the accommodation of the shaft of a water wheel. The spot is now a picturesque place with a grove of pines and ought to be marked in some way as the site of an early and long-lived industry.

CHAPTER V

The Blacksmiths

Even as late as 1840 Middleton had a population of only 671 persons. Considering the number of blacksmiths who worked there and the number of their shops in so small a community, one must realize how exceedingly important the ironworker was to the town. One comes inevitably to the conclusion that in pioneer days he was the most essential craftsman. Grist mills and sawmills are usually given first place, but they never could have been built without the blacksmiths to make the machinery parts. Although a pioneer settler generally arrived with ax, saw, and hammer, he soon had to depend on the blacksmith not only for other tools, but also for every bit of metal work that went into the building of his house and barn, his carts, and farm implements.

In view of these conditions, it is not surprising that Thomas Fuller, an ironworker, was invited to settle in Will's Hill only four years after the arrival of Bray Wilkins and his sons in 1659. Fuller had previously lived and worked in Woburn. Arriving in 1663, he bought from Daniel Denison of Ipswich 300 acres of land adjoining the larger grant that Wilkins had acquired from Governor Bellingham. Fuller built his house and blacksmith shop near the rushing stream that drained the pond and he and his descendants ran a smithy there for many years. His son Jacob was a blacksmith, too, and his son Thomas is mentioned in deeds more particularly as a plowwright. Jacob's son Edward was also a smith.

It appears from the records that Bray Wilkins was hopeful of finding iron ore on his land and perhaps starting a bloomery. This did not happen during his lifetime, although an ironworks was founded by others in 1708. In 1673 we find that Thomas Fuller was getting his bar iron at the furnace run by the Leonards in Boxford. According to the *Quarterly Court Records* of Essex County,[1] he made the following deposition:

The Testimony of Thomas fuller aged about 58 yeares sworne saith that being at John Goulds about a day or two before the Iron works at Rowley village were burned, I asked him for some Iron upon Bartholomew Gidney's accott, the said Gould told, he shoulde helpe me to (?) with in a weeke or fortnight, for he or they had set Nathll Leonard to worke so I Left him expecting the Iron but within 2 or 3 days I heard the works were burnt — Taken upon Oath Before me mrch 19: 1674.

Daniel Denison

Before this short-lived industry was in operation, we may assume that Fuller got his iron from Saugus.

There is little information about the activities in the Fuller shop, except that plow irons were a specialty. They were certainly needed. John Putnam, a first settler in nearby Danvers, had been obliged to clear his whole farm with a plow made entirely of wood. Whatever their output, the Fullers suffered no competition during the seventeenth century, and none in fact until after the death of Jacob Fuller in 1731.

A few years later one Joshua Wright appeared on the scene. A child of his was born in Middleton in 1738 and "the blacksmith Shop" is mentioned in a town record April 15, 1740, placing its location on the Andover Road between what is now Middleton Square and Boston Street. It stood by the outlet from Middleton Pond and is again referred to in 1748, when the town voted against maintaining "2 Bridges by or near Joshua Wright's Shop." The building was still there in 1761 and perhaps later.

Meanwhile another eighteenth-century family was playing a very important part in this iron business. Isaac and Israel Kenney, brothers, both blacksmiths, were working at the family homestead on an old road that ran north along the river from the Maple Street bridge. Now a mere lane, this is still called Kenney Road. Israel died in 1747, shortly after his brother had become the bloomer at the Middleton ironworks. Isaac lived until 1793. He left his home to his two sons, Asa and Simeon, who also followed the trade. Since they both died in the early 1800's, their utensils were sold at auction in 1803.

A few others worked in Middleton before 1800. Ebenezer Putnam ran a shop in 1790 on the corner of what is now Maple and East Streets. This was probably the same shop mentioned in a deed from Jonathan Knight to Eleazer Brown, when in 1786 he bougth part of the Deacon Edward Putnam, Jr., farm near this corner, bounded "by the road near to a blacksmith shop." Brown, too, was a smith. He lived in the Putnam house from 1784 to 1792.

The state census of properties made in 1798 also notes a blacksmith's shop 24 x 24 on the land of Francis Peabody. When Peabody died in 1817, a list of a great many blacksmith's and cooper's tools appeared in his inventory. His brother, Benjamin, who was an all-around craftsman, probably did his smithing there. The 1798 census also lists Theodore Ingalls, one of the more important members of his craft, who had a large shop 38 x 22.

In the nineteenth century there was a smithy on the corner of Main and Lake Streets in Middleton Square, owned sucessively by Thomas Lake, 1818, Silas Lake, 1824, and Hermon Berry, the following year. In the southern part of the town, at the corner of Route 114 and Haswell Park (the "Bush Corner"), John Richardson was established before 1800 and worked there until he died in 1826. He was succeeded by George W. Winslow. In 1835 David Stiles, then beginning a long and active career, took over. After a brief period, however, Stiles settled on a lot of land west of the church.

Seven different blacksmiths, beginning with George Webb in 1837, occupied the land on South Main Street between Boston Street and the brook, near the site of the old Wright shop. The best known of them was William H. Grothe, who seems to have been the only person to offer serious competition to the Stiles business. He was there in 1875 and as late as 1895, when he leased his shop to James H. Gallagher, who later purchased it and Grothe's house as well.

These then were the men who kept the horses and oxen shod, the wagons moving, the farm tools in repair, and who supplied the house builders with house hardware and their wives with kitchen utensils. A more detailed account of their activities proves of interest.

We know little about the first blacksmiths and can picture their lives and surroundings only from occasional records. When Israel Kenney died in 1747, an inventory of the equipment of his shop was made. Among the objects of his trade were an Anvil 75/, a Bellows 50/, bar Iron 8/9, horse Shoes 39/6, Bar Iron 10/, Sledge & Hammer 14/6, shop tongs 3/2, old iron 15/6, nails 6/6, iron ladle 1/3, scrap iron 5/6, Iron Bar 4/10, Screw plate & pins 1/6, two pound of Steel 3/7, Small Hammers 1/6, Drill stock 1/6, Butteras & pincers 2/3, Stake anvils 6/4, old Cast Iron 1/5, small Hoops 1/, old Iron 6/4, Bucket 1/6, Wire 1/6. He also left "one sixth part of an iron mill" (the iron-works in Middleton). These items were the implements of his business, but can we doubt that his fire slice, plow irons, iron tooth harrow, timber chain, and other tools were of his own making? And what about his "Grindstone & tackling to Grind rasurs"?

From the memory of David Stiles, himself a smith, comes the following about his predecessor Theodore Ingalls.[2] "In the early days of manufacturing edged tools Mr. Ingalls stood very high; his axes were sent to Maine to cut down those great forests; his scythes were also very good, though clumsy compared with those made at the present time. The writer's father well remembered those scythes. Mr. Ingalls also made hoes and shovels, etc., and these tools were made in a common blacksmith shop which stood at the north side of the long causeway."

This fine craftsman had come to Middleton from Andover in the 1700's, settled on what is now Essex Street, and worked there until his death in 1817. His inventory, among other things, mentions an ox swing and leather.

Ingalls' sons Moody and Enoch learned their father's trade. Enoch died young, but Moody carried on an extensive business for some years until he, too, passed away in his early thirties in 1832. During the years 1826-1830 he kept a carefully written account book.[3] He and his wife, the former Nancy Perkins, then lived in and owned a house on the southwest corner of Maple and King Streets, and his shop, moved from the Ingalls place, stood across Maple Street a little to the west. Taking his record as representative of the period, we have a complete picture of blacksmithing in the early 1800's — what was made, what was repaired, and what was done on wagons and sleds.

There is hardly a small object found in a hardware store today that was not fashioned laboriously by hand in Moody's shop: nails, bolts, spikes, hasps, staples, rivets, hinges, latches, rings, washers, hoops, and swivels are but a few of such necessities. Some of these small things had names that we do not recognize today. "Snibels", for instance! They came in pairs. After weeks of fruitless questioning and search, I finally discovered that the word was derived from the old English "snipe-bill," a kind of molding plane. In America it was given Moody's spelling and meant a bolt for attaching the body of a cart to the axle. "Neb" was another doubtful word until I learned that a neb iron was the sharpened and bent piece that was inserted in the wooden handle of a scythe. There is indication that the word had another meaning, too. Ingalls noted a neb iron that weighed thirteen pounds. This was perhaps the tongue of an ox cart, sometimes called a neb. Certain smaller objects, hinges, especially, were sold by the pound, and some larger ones, such as mantel trees, were also priced according to weight.

Every bit of hardware about a house could be made by the local blacksmith. We read with interest of Moody Ingalls making gutter hooks, shutter holders, curtain hooks, and foot scrapers. Cranes and crane eyes were staple articles, as were the mantel irons that had replaced the old wooden lintels in the fireplaces of this period. Ingalls fashioned grates and turf grates for a number of people. One of the latter weighed

Mr. and Mrs. David Stiles in the 1860'S.

eighteen pounds. Household implements were diversified. We read of such articles as gridirons, toast irons, a "duch" oven, a fire shovel, tongs, a cartridge box, a steel fork, a corkscrew, pot hooks, a tin kitchen, a bed wrench, a knife and cleaver, and "skewers to spit." An intriguing item is "nose baskets," presumably for the horse's lunch.

Tools for general use were frequently listed: an axe, a screw driver, a plane iron, and pincers, were all in the day's work. However, aside from the regular business of shoeing horses and oxen, the greater part of a blacksmith's work seems to have been the making and repairing of farm tools. Perhaps the most common products were hay hooks, hay or dung forks, and brush hooks. Crowbars, shovels, hoes, and iron teeth for harrows appear frequently. Many little things, such as the delicate bowpins that held an oxbow in place in the yoke, or a clevis, the pin that could be released for tipping a dump cart, a clasp for a well pole, or even an iron for shelling corn, required meticulous craftsmanship. A bowpin cost but five cents.

In these days, when our utensils are planned for obsolescence, it would be a revelation to most people to learn from this account how every common article was fixed and repaired. Moody Ingalls had daily jobs of hooping barrels or pails, putting bails on tea kettles, mending grates, and fixing this or that. The farmer's plow was ever in need of attention, either to be sharpened or to have new parts or adjustments. Draft chains were always breaking and having to be mended. Tools such as axes were taken to the blacksmith for "upsetting" — a process of drawing out the edge to needed sharpness. Picks had to be sharpened frequently, especially those used in grist mills for roughing and marking the millstones. Ingalls did work for all the millers.

In addition to all this making and mending, which no doubt kept Moody busy through a twelve-hour day, was the endless repair work on wagons and sleighs. He actually did wheelwright's work, tiring wheels and shoeing sleds, and there were always rings, bolts, bars, rivets, and other small parts needed to "fix" somebody's wagon or harness.

In early accounts there are numerous references to "laying" plowshares and other tools with steel. Even the earliest Middleton craftsmen seem to have been familiar with this finer metal. "Two pound of Steel" is noted in the 1747 inventory of Israel Kenney, cited above; and Benjamin Peabody billed Eleazer Brown for "steal" at eight pence per pound in 1786. In 1790 he procured some German steel at a higher price of nineteen pence a pound. David Stiles in the nineteenth century was also using German steel for loam knives. In the 1880's he even turned out some steel frying pans, rather homemade in appearance, with iron handles in typical blacksmith style. One of these, given to its owner by Stile's son, is now in the museum of the Middleton Historical Society.

With all his diverse activities the blacksmith still spent the greater part of his time shoeing horses and oxen and sharpening their shoes. Theodore Ingalls had an ox sling, as did his son, and later David Stiles. The apparatus was a great oaken frame with a hammock of leather, which held the ox off the floor, while his feet were tied to the frame in such a way that he could not move. An ox sling, or swing, is a rarity today.

Col. Benjamin Peabody could turn his hand to any trade, as we learn from his dealings with Eleazer Brown. In December 1785 he worked for Brown four-and-one-half days shoeing oxen. As he was employed several times after that, he must have had a way with oxen. Actually it was a difficult matter to handle the great beasts. In 1795 Peabody worked in the same capacity in Eben Putnam's shop. In February 1803, he helped Eleazer Brown build a new shop. Benjamin spent one day building a chimney and a half a day hanging the bellows, and he apparently did all the work of framing and boarding the structure as well. In November he bills Brown for half a day spent in "moving his cole house and sling."

The document inserted at this point was found in the Martha J. Averill *Manuscripts,* vol. I, p. 87, in the Essex Institute. It is the checklist of "Farming utensils and blacksmith's tools and sundry other Articles," auctioned by Benjamin Peabody, December 15, 1803, "at the dwelling house of Mr. Asa Kenny late of Middleton deceased." The great variety of iron implements, all of them probably made by this smith family, is truly astonishing.

1 ? old Iron,	Joseph Peabody	.40
1 Box of old Iron	Eliezer Brown	.40
2 pair B Tongs	Eliezer Brown	.15
2 pair Blacksmith Tongs	Eliezer Brown	.42
1 pair Pincers	Jeremiah Upton	.50
2 Blacksmith Hammers	Eleazer Brown	.60
1 Nail Hammer	Stephen Nichols	135
2 Carpenters Chisels	Joseph Peabody	.28
1 Shingling Hammer	Francis Peabody 1st	.55
1 Hoe	Joseph Peabody	.58
1 Best Hoe	Asa How	.60
1 Iron Tipt Shovel	Joseph Peabody	.35
1 Small pitch-fork	Elijah Wilkins	.70
1 Large pitch-fork	Joseph Peabody	.83
1 New bar-Iron	Nehemh Wilkins	.78
2 old Scythes	Francis Peabody st	.17
1 Scythe	David Preston	.43
1 Peck of sea Coal	Johnson Kenny	.27
1 Half Bushel	Johnson Kenny	.20
1 Tar Kettle	Asa How	.43
2 old Scythe-sneathes	Sylvester Cave	.64
1 old Axe	Elijah Wilkins	.51
1 Axe & halve		

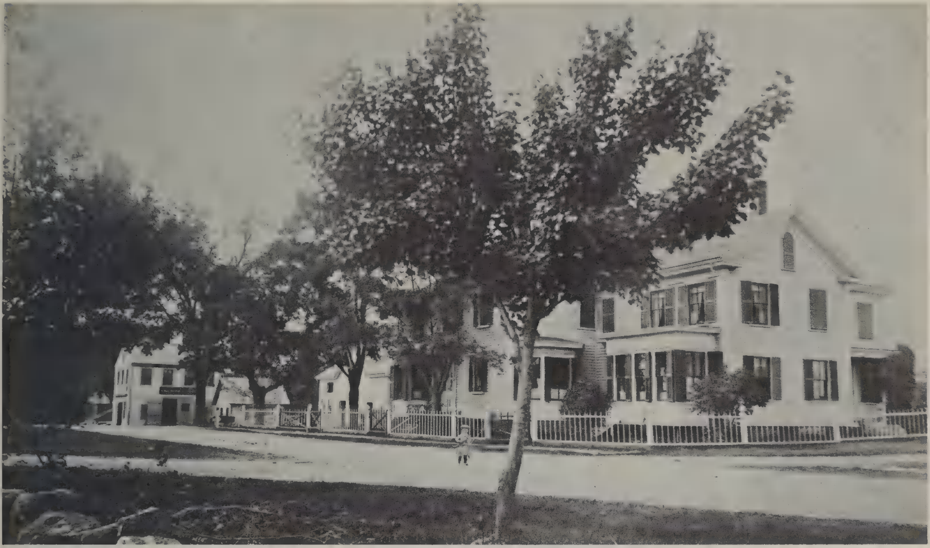
1 Turf Spade	Oliver Perkins	.15
1 Small do.	Joseph Peabody	1.01
1 Large do.	John Preston	2.09
1 Turf Hoe	James Russell	1.07
1 Iron Whipple tree & ?	Stephen Richardson	1.10
1 Grind-stone, Crank, frame, frow	Francis Peabody 1st	3.73
1 Fine do		5.00

Adjourned to Dec. 16

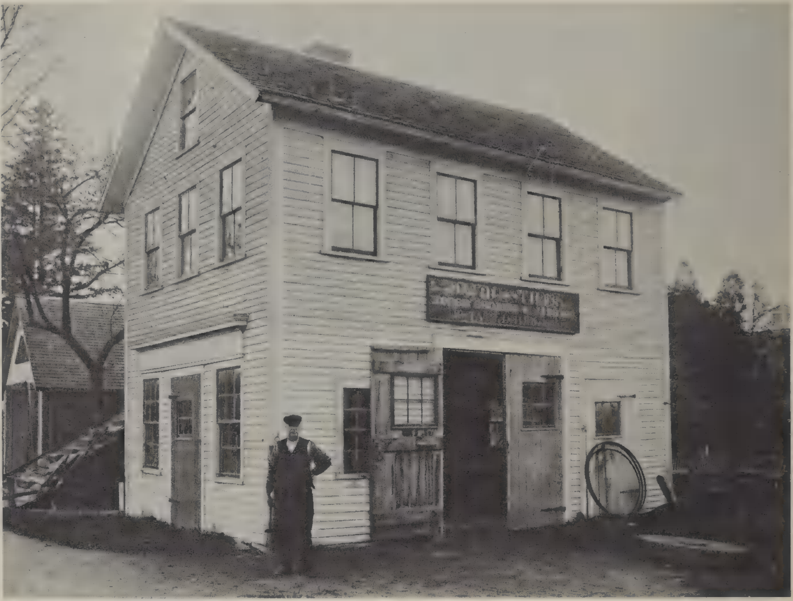
2 pair Ox bows	David Preston	.40
1 pair Ox bows	Joseph Peabody	.30
1 pair Horse fetters	Francis Peabody 2d	.37
1 Dung fork	Ens. Ezra Bradstreet	1.21
1 Brush-hook	Elijah Wilkins	.15
Another	Joseph Peabody	.21
Another	Moses Perkins	.26
1 Cart Chain	William Whitford	.68
1 Cyder Shovel	Asa How	.50
1 Frail (flail?)	Elijah Wilkins	.32
1 Pair Snow Shoes	Andrew Peabody	.84
1 Broken handle fork	Joseph Peabody	.36
1 Small pitch-fork	Johnson Kenny	.44
	Eng. Ezra Bradstreet	.76
1 small Broad Axe	David Fuller	2.00
1 Larg Broad Axe	John Stiles	2.34
1 Iron tooth Harrow	Asa How	8.00
1 Seed Plough	David Fuller	3.00
1 Long Seed Plough	David Fuller	2.21
1 old Break	Zaccheus Giddings	.60
Draft Chain	Andrew Meriam	2.80
1 Cross-cutt Saw	Thomas Kimball	3.10
1 old Yoke	Amos Cave	1.01
1 Iron Barr	Francis Peabody 2d	2.01
1 small Sledge	Asa How	.78
1 Larg Sledge	Eleazer Brown	1.50
1 Iron Anvil	Andrew Gould	9.25
1 peck Iron	Theo Ingals	1.95
1 Small Iron Vice	Majr Eben Goodale	4.15
1 Pair Blacksmiths bellowes	Theo Ingals	4.20
1 Large Iron Vic	Theo Ingals	5.65
1 Turf Spade	Allen Knights	2.54
1 Hand-Saw	Francis Peabody 1st	1.40
2 Rakes	Amos Cave	.71
2 Rakes	David Fuller	.55
2 Rakes	Francis Peabody 2d	.31
1 Dragg	Asa How	1.10

We now come to the story of David Stiles, who was a personality of account in Middleton. His father David and his uncle Asa had been blacksmiths before him, and David learned the rudiments of his trade in a workshop on the old Stiles farm on Essex Street. At the age of sixteen he was apprenticed to Frederick Howe in Danvers, where he worked for nearly a year after his time was up. In 1835, as related above, he took over John Richardson's former shop, and in December of that year he bought a piece of land with a house and barn and the former Ingalls shop on Maple Street.

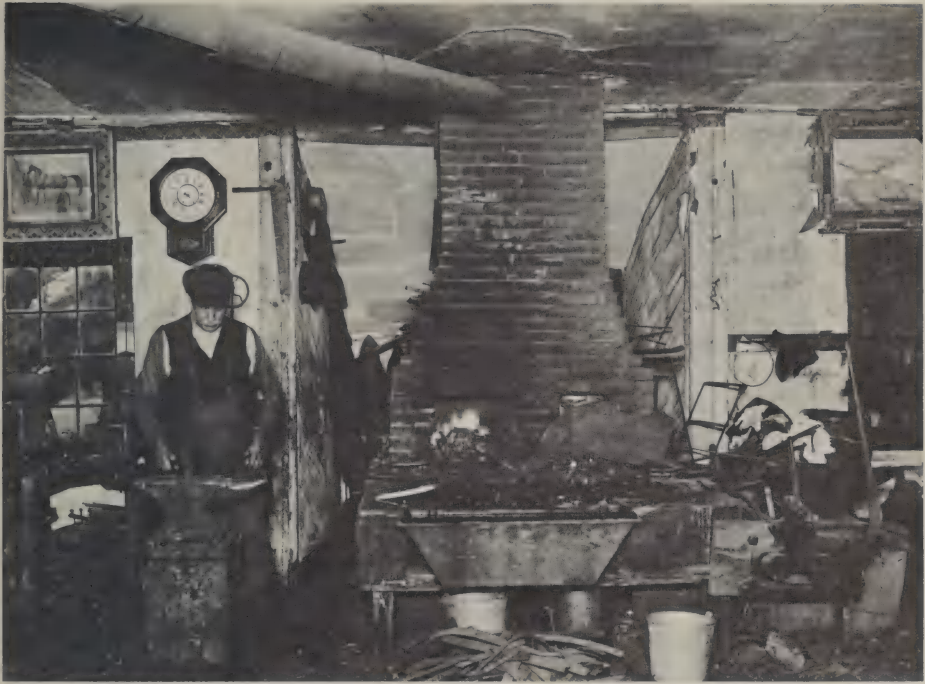
For fifteen years Stiles plied his trade in this building, until, in the 1850's, he put up a new one to serve the double function of a forge and a carriage shop. A ramp led from the street level to the upper floor, where the carriages were made and repaired. David's son, Clinton P.



Home and Shops of David Stiles on Maple Street, 1886.



100 The Stiles blacksmith shop from a photograph taken in the 1920'S.



Interior of Stiles blacksmith shop from a photograph
taken in the 1920'S. Cilnton P. Stiles at work.

Stiles, who worked with his father and later succeeded him, specialized in this branch of the business. A smaller building for wheelwright work also stood on the land at one time.

The photograph of the shop exterior taken in 1925 shows the sign over the door: DAVID STILES HORSE SHOWING & JOBBING ESTABLISHED 1855. Considerable interest attached to this building. Frank Tyler, who had the pictures taken to illustrate an article in *The Salem Evening News,* November 27, 1925, said that the heavy timbers in it came from the first meeting house in Middleton. This was purchased and dismantled by Stiles in 1846. According to the writer, "Some of the great oak beams and buttonwood planking have been preserved as relics. I was shown one of the beams 10 x 12, and hand hewn, in the Stiles blacksmith shop. This beam is sixteen feet long and one end rests on the cellar bottom, while the upper end protruding above the first floor, supports the shop anvil."

In the fall of 1963 a few interested members of the Middleton Historical Society did some amateur archeology on the site of David Stiles's shop. Along with innumerable horseshoes (probably not fashioned by Stiles) they found harrow teeth, various kinds of hooks, an ax head, parts of other tools, a pintle, and so on. An object that had to be identified was dug up directly under the position of the anvil. It was a hardy — a small removable wedge that used to be set in a hole in the fore part of the anvil. A piece of heated rod or ironbar laid across its edge could be broken off by hammering.[3]

By mid-century the machine age was creeping up on the blacksmith. The day of making edged tools in local shops had gone by. Mr. Stiles expanded into the new era by inventing a hay and stalk cutter, which he patented July 16, 1850. The machine seems to have had considerable success. It was exhibited at county fairs and was sold throughout the New England states and beyond. As time went on, the manufacture and sale of the cutter became a large part of his business, and the making and repairing of carriages injected new life into it.

David Stiles was a deacon of the Congregational Church, taught in its Sabbath School for sixty years, and was active in town affairs. He studied the care of horses and occasionally wrote and read papers on the subject. In his later years he wrote a history of Middleton for Hurd's *History of Essex County, Massachusetts.* It was based on reminiscences and not scientifically documented, but investigation proves that what he had to say was usually right. A blacksmith must have had rare opportunities for keeping his finger on the pulse of the town. Stiles died suddenly August 7, 1888. His son, who carried on the shop for many years, appears in the photograph working at his anvil.

Blacksmiths were needed as long as there were horses. We all know how quickly they disappeared. Today it would be hard to find a shop devoted to the working of iron in the old way.

CHAPTER V NOTES

1. Trans. Rowley Iron works suit, John Gould v. Nathaniel Putnam, *Quarterly Court Records of Essex County,* 42, 83.
2. David Stiles, "Middleton," *History of Essex County, Massachusetts,* D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., Philadelphia, 1888.
3. In Middleton Historical Society Collections.

CHAPTER VI

Textile Working in Middleton

In her admirable book, *Early American Textiles,*[1] Frances Little notes that in fifty Rhode Island inventories of the early 1700's she found mention of only nine looms. From this fact she deduced that weaving was generally done outside the home by professional or village weavers. Other evidence proves that she is essentially correct, especially in reference to the early period of our history. However, their is also evidence that while itinerant weavers operated the looms in many households, members of the families frequently performed that task. At first the family's sheep wool or home-grown flax was generally spun by women and children, and a professional craftsman was called in for the more intricate and difficult business of managing the loom. Nevertheless, in the course of time many women learned the latter art to the great advantage of their household economy.

Essex County probate records between 1638 and 1680 give us the names of more than a dozen men in Newbury, Rowley, Ipswich, Salem, and Lynn, who were undoubtedly weavers. They are sometimes directly so called, or they are identified as such because they handed on their looms to sons who were weavers, because they owned more than one loom, or had a loom with more tackling and equipment than one would expect to find in a house. In such inventories there is no mention of wheels, which would certainly have been present in a house equipped for the complete manufacture of cloth. Furthermore, we sometimes find reference to "cloth at the weaver's." Wool, cotton, linen, and tow were utilized and there are numerous entries of yarn and flax and of unfinished cloth.

Although for a number of years I have listed trades and craftsmen in Middleton, I have found only two references to weavers who actually lived there. Jonathan Kenney, son of Thomas Kenney, a weaver of Salem Village, bought in 1708 a house and forty acres of Ephraim and Jane Shelden in the former Boxford section of the town. Kenney was called "weaver" in a deed from Timothy Putnam, weaver, of Newbury, dated November 2, 1713 (30-50). This was a piece of meadow bordering Kenney's own land. Jonathan married Rebecca Nourse in 1707 and had three children born in Boxford before April 1716. By 1720 he had left town, having sold his house and farm on November 7 of that year to his brother Daniel (39-69). His activities as a craftsman in Boxford were therefore limited to a period of not more than twelve years and probably less.

The next textile worker to be recorded in Middleton was Samuel Lambert (Lombard), a weaver. Although the births of his five children were recorded in Middleton, they seem to have been born bfore his arrival there. The first evidence of his presence in town appears in 1722, when he bought a house and a small piece of land in the bounds of Salem Village. The property lay south of Beech Brook near the present School Street and was part of the holdings given in 1715 to Edward Fuller by his father Jacob, who had inherited it from Thomas Fuller, its first owner. The deed, dated March 19, 1722 (38-234), runs:

> Edward Fuller husbandman or blacksmith, for the Sum of three pounds paid by Samuel Lambert of Salem — a certain Gusset of Land being an Acre and a half or thereabouts — in Salem. Bounds to begin at a little white oak tree marked with stones about it Standing in the Line between the Land of said Fuller and Thomas Bayley and from that tree upon a straight line to a stake with stones about it Standing at the edge of the Brook and so bounded on the one side by John Fuller's meadow and on the other side by Thomas Bayley's upland.

When Jacob Fuller gave his son Edward 160 acres, there was a small house and "a large new Frame of another house" upon it. The chances are that Edward finished and lived in the new house and that the little dwelling was the one conveyed to Samuel Lambert. When, one month later, Fuller sold all his estate to John Berry, Lambert's land was mentioned as a westerly bound. It was therefore near the west end of what is now School Street, and the "Gusset" may have been the three-cornered piece between School and Essex Streets.

A town vote under date of May 18, 1739, allowed Samuel and Ebenezer Berry to work in "the way that Comes From their houses into Andover Road By the house that was Samuel Lombard's." Lambert died in 1739, and this record fixes the date as before May 18. He and his family had lived in Middleton for seventeen years and presumably he provided for them by his craftsmanship, but I have been unable to find further reference to his trade. He and his wife were members of the Salem Village church in 1726, but not thereafter. He was rated for the minister in Middleton in 1729, but never joined the Congregational Society.

Lambert's only son, Joseph, became a tailor in Marblehead. His oldest daughter, Patience, married Solomon Wilkins, Eunice became the wife of Richard Thomas, and Sarah married Francis Carroll, all of Middleton. Mary married William Bradford, son of a Boxford weaver, and they removed in 1744 to Amherst, New Hampshire. On March 8, 1739/40, Lambert's widow and the five heirs conveyed the Middleton house and lands to Stephen Wilkins, and in August 1740 Mrs. Lambert became Mrs. Benjamin Wilkins. This was the end of the Lambert name in Middleton.

Living just over the line in what is now Danvers near the present site of the Essex County Sanatorium, were two brothers, Samuel and Benjamin Cheever, who made a business of weaving. Their father, Ezekiel, who owned the farm, was a tailor, and son of Ezekiel Cheever, famous master of the Boston Latin School in the 1600's. The probate record of Nathaniel Carrel (P. R. 4754), who at the time of his death had a house in Boxford near the Maple Street bridge, shows a bill for weaving from Ebenezer Cheever. However, Ebenezer was not a weaver, but a cooper, and he must have presented the bill in behalf of his brothers. Dated May 21, 1719, the paper specifies 'to weaving 34.3 yards of wool Cloth - 10 - 11 - 13." Another item, dated "January the 7 day, 1721", was for three coverlets, made for sixteen shillings, six pence.

Nearly all the other references concerning textiles in Middleton that I have been able to find date from the mid-eighteenth century and later. A notable exception appears in the inventory of Isaac Burton, taken May 17, 1706. This mentions a loom and tackling and a linen wheel. It is noteworthy that a large proportion of the inhabitants who left probate records owned looms.

The inventory of Hezekiah Wilkins, a well-to-do farmer who lived in the former Boxford part of town, is dated December 26, 1756, and lists: one loom & three Reads — 18/; Ten yards Blanketing Cloath at 1/8 - 16.8; about 10 pounds Sheeps wool - 12.8; about 24 pound flax - 16/; two woolen wheels & one linnen wheal - 10.0; Sum woolen yearn - 4/.

In 1757, when Rev. Andrew Peters died, he left a loom and 14 pounds of sheeps' wool (he owned sheep). Without doubt he sent his wool out to a regular craftsman.

Textile items in the inventory of Ebenezer Berry, taken April 24, 1761, include "flax in the Bundle 4/, Looms and furniture 18/, four Spinning

Wheals 14/, flax come 8/, Warping Bars Quil Whele & Swifts 1/6, flax in the hous 5/".

Roger Elliott, son of one of Middleton's more prosperous farmers, according to his inventory, taken June 11, 1762, owned "three woolen wheales, 3 Linning wheales & one Clock Real - 01.0; one Loom & Tackl - ing 20/; 20 Pound of Flax - 13/4; and 26 Pound of wool - 1.11.2."

The inventory of the estate of Col. Archelaus Fuller, dated February 4, 1777, suggests a great deal of home activity: "a Loom & furniture - 20/4; 2 woolen wheels - 6; 2 Linnen wheels - 13/4; Clock reel - 2/8." The household textiles included "14 Linen sheets, 3 Diaper table cloths, 6 Linnen towels, 5 pr Cotton & Linen pillow cases, 2 rag rugs, 2 Check'd Blankets, a striped Blanket, 10 Cotton & Linen sheets, and 10 Cotton & Linen pillow cases."

We may also mention that Jacob Fuller, dying in 1768, left "a Loom & the utensils for weaving" worth three pounds, twelve shillings, and "2 old Linen wheels & one woolen Do and old flax Comb" worth twenty shillings.

These lists, representative of the equipment found in Middleton homes in the mid-eighteenth century, do not prepare us for the most astonishing community effort made anywhere in New England in protest against the restrictions on American manufactures previous to the Revolution. To quote Albert Bushnell Hart:

> An example of patriotic industry in the hamlet of Middleton, where in ninety dwellings were worked between eighty and ninety looms. From January 1769 to January 1770, a total of 20,522 yards was produced, more than forty yards for each man, woman, and child inhabitant. It is probable that women's work may have stimulated the merchants to sign the non-importation agreement of 1769.

The circumstances that led to this mass endeavor are explained by the following advertisement, which appeared in the *Essex County Gazette,* April 25, 1769:

> We hear that a Number of Weavers are greatly wanted in some Townes in this populous County, the Country People being at much Trouble to get the great quantities they spin wove into Cloth: Therefore a Number of that Business would undoubtedly find great Encouragement in this Way. We are told by a person belonging to Middleton, who is desirous of encouraging American Manufactures, that he has now a House empty, and will let any Person, who can carry on the Business properly, have the same, for one Year, Rent-free.

This appeal proves, of course, that there were no professional weavers in Middleton at this time. That a village of 500 inhabitants should succeed in turning out such a quantity of cloth seems almost incredible. It represents a product of more than 225 yards woven in each dwelling, not taking into account the raising of materials, carding, spinning, and perhaps dyeing. Every member of the family must have had a hand in it.

The arduous labor of making cloth in the home is well described in a diary kept by Elizabeth Fuller of Princeton, Massachusetts.[3] Elizabeth was the daughter of Rev. Timothy Fuller, who was born in Middleton, May 18, 1739, and she was the aunt of the famous Margaret Fuller Ossoli. Timothy, after completing his education, was settled as the minister of Princeton in 1767. Elizabeth began her diary during her father's second term there in 1790, when she was fifteen.

For two years she writes an astonishing record of her achievements in cloth-making, a vocation in which she took great pride and which seems to have suited her very well. Weaving was not her only activity. The tremendous variety of household chores done by this teen-aged girl in addition to her textile work is truly amazing. She notes doing the family washing, "mincing the link meat" for sausage, scouring the pewter or the floor, making sixteen dozen candles, or making and baking "three ovens full of pyes for Thanksgiving." As time went on, however, her principal employment was picking wool, carding, spinning, setting up her loom, and weaving.

A great deal of this record is concerned with the making of "Pa's coat." It is of interest to follow this project as an illustration of the labors attendant on producing an article of wearing apparel from start to finish. On February 9, 1791, Elizabeth notes, "I am picking blue wool." The next entry, February 17, says, "I picked wool." On the eighteenth she finished this work. Four days later she records, "I began to break the blue wool for Pa's coat, broke a pound & three quarters in the P.M." The next day she broke four pounds and the following day she completed this part of the process.

"Ma began to spin the wool for Pa's coat" on March first, while her daughter carded for her and did the household work. The next day she says, "Ma is a spinning." The spinning is noted on at least six different days, but, as the entries do not occur every day, it may have taken longer. In any event, she finished her blue wool on the twenty-fifth, besides spinnink two and one-half skeins of filling yarn.

At this point Elizabeth's mother sent to Mrs. Mirick's to get a slay harness and Elizabeth herself then visited Mrs. Mirick and warped the piece — that is, cut the warp threads to the length of the finished cloth and wound them ready for the loom. The girl was not yet experienced enough to prepare the loom, and the next day Mrs. Garfield came to show her how to "draw in the piece." The next day, March 30, she began to weave. At first she wove fifteen yards of white wool — apparently for a lining. She worked at a rate not generally exceeded by professional weavers, one day doing more than five yards. Mrs. Garfield came again to help her start the blue, and by April 7 she began to weave that. A week later she took the cloth from the loom and Pa carried it to Mr. Deadman's. Deadman was probably a fuller, who cleansed and pressed homemade cloth, and not a tailor. Mrs. Fuller did the work of cutting and making the garment, but not until a year later. In July, 1792, the mother and daughter also prepared the yarn for a blue surtout for the minister.

Elizabeth's diary is concerned almost wholly with her weaving record. It is pleasant to learn that after working two months on her father's coat, she found time to attend to her own wardrobe. Mrs. Garfield taught her how to make a harness from the linen yarn she had spun. After that she seems to have worked with little assistance. The following entries in June 1791, show how her own outfit was prepared from the materials she had woven.

June 5 — I made myself a shift.
June 7 — I made myself a blue worsted Coat.
June 9 — I helped Sally make me a blue worsted Gown.
June 10 — I helped Sally make me a brown Woolen Gown.
June 12 — Sally cut out a striped Lutestring Gown for me.
June 15 — I cut out a striped linnen Gown — Sally finished my lutestring.
June 16 — Ma cut out a coattea for me
June 18 — Sally finished my Coattea.
June 19 — I finished my striped linnen Gown.
June 20 — Sabbath. I went to Church. wore my lutestring.

Elizabeth Fuller occasionally commented on her activities with dry humor. Once, after spinning for two weeks, she wrote: "I spun. I should think I might have spun up all the Swingling tow in America by this time." One more note is interesting as an illustration of the neighborly cooperation in those days of so much work. "Mr. and Mrs. Bangs here this evening a visiting. They broke seven pounds of Wool."

This diary, written by a girl from a Middleton family, could no doubt have been duplicated by many a Middleton woman who had the care of making cloth for her household.

An informative paragraph in the diary of Rev. William Bentley shows that in this very year clothmaking was still being carried on in the homes of Middleton.[4] "Cloth is made in private families of good qualities. I saw a specimen from the family of the Revd Elias Smith of Middleton, wove intermixed black & white, very dark ground, & finished very well. Mr. Richardson carried some this day to the Fuller's mill at Ipswich, & intended a better specimen from his farm in Middleton to be sent to Lancaster, Worcestershire, to a noted Fuller in that place."

There is little other record of how or where Middleton textiles were finished and prepared for use. The earliest reference is dated January 4, 1702/3, when John McCarty of Salem conveyed to Peter McCarty, his son, his "right in a fulling mill which I have upon Ipswich River near John Phelps." This stood at the dam still to be seen near the United Shoe Machinery Chemical Works in South Middleton. In 1724 the right belonged to John Buxton, who sold his share in it to Ezekiel Upton on April third. In this deed the provisions expressed are that "Ezekiel Upton shall have one half part of that half part which my Father John Buxton built and reserved for the use of his fulling mill." Upton was also given the privilege of building a fulling mill or waterworks adjoining the dam or at any other convenient place on Upton's land next the river. Whether the original mill was still standing at this time, or whether another was built is uncertain. It was probably in existence at least until the death of John Buxton, Sr., in 1715. Such a mill was no doubt patronized by the residents of the original Salem Village section of Middleton.

There is also record of a carding mill that existed in the town for a brief period. According to David Stiles, a man named Gray established the business in 1810 near Dr. Merriam's grist mill on the outlet of Middleton Pond. He says it could not compete with better equipped mills in the larger towns. The date given by Stiles is obviously incorrect, as William Gray, the only man of the name in Middleton records, died in 1801 at the age of forty-one. He and his wife, the former Sarah Smith, whom he married in 1786, were in Middleton as early as 1791, when the birth of one of their children was recorded. They lived in a small house near the church built by Andrew Fuller and later owned by his son John.

Middleton inventories of the early 1800's indicate a good deal of textile-making activity in the homes. Unless time proves that there were professional weavers living in town, we must assume that the patriotic citizens of 1769 had handed on their knowledge of the crafts to their descendants. A few examples from the probate records show the equipment and a few of the products. The inventory of Samuel Wilkins, for instance, dated January 11, 1804, includes: All wool Cloth — $6; eight pound Sheeps wool — $2.67; Three foot wheels — $2.50; wollen wheels — $1.33; the Slays and harnesses — $3; one pair Cards, on old Lomb Quilwheel & swifts — $1; one warping bar & Crele and 33 Spools —

$1.50; 28 sheets — $23.33 (last wifes); 17 pair Sheets — $28.33; thirty yards sheet Linning — $5; one Loom with the tackling — $6; one foot wheel & one wollen wheel — $1.50; one clock real — 75c.

At the home of Francis Peabody, Jr., third of the name, on East Street, there was a "lomb house" among the buildings that served the many purposes of his self-subsistent farm. When Peabody died in 1817, an inventory was taken, March 4 (P.B. 20827). At that time the upper chamber of the loom house was the storage place for a "a lot of Claboards, pin timber, & c" and a lot of "stuff," or prepared lumber, from Peabody's sawmill. However, the list of textile items shows that it was still a busy place. Mentioned are:

2 Flax Brakes 70c
a lomb, warping bars, quill wheel, swifts, tempels & c $6
a tape lomb 20c
4 bushels of Flax seed $3.66
4 Slays $2.75
100 lb Flax $17

A flax comb $1.75
Sley $1
A Sley & Reeds $1.30
Woolen wheel 75c
Worsted combs $1
Linen wheel $1
A Clock Reel 33c

The inventory of Theodore Ingalls, made January 6, 1819, contains so many woven items it suggests that his wife may have enjoyed the craft as do many women today. The equipment included a loom, warping bars, creel, quill wheel, swift, reeds, shaft, and spools, valued at eight dollars, and flax and flax comb worth six. In the house was a plentiful supply of linens:

43 pillow cases $6.66
2 window curtains
Dimity table cloth $1.50
5 other table cloths $2.50
4 woolen cover lets $6
3 woolen cover lets $6
1 Shalloon Quilt $3

1 Calico and two woolen cover-lets and two cuffertables $4
1 Woolen cover-let $5
5 Pair of Woollen and Cotton blankets $11
29 Pair of cotton and Linen Sheets $30
25 Pair pillow cases $5
16 Diaper towels $3

The home of Stephen Richardson, whose inventory was taken January 5, 1830, following his death, had many utensils and products of the textile craft. In the list are:

basket & wool 0. .50
Coton yarn 0. .50
Seven rag rugs & quilts 1. .40
warping Barrs & reel 0. .75
A lot of Linning Yarn 1. .75

one pair swifts 0. .06
27 yds woolen Cloth 10. .00
A lot woolen yarn 4. .00
a lot of flax and toe 5. .50
1 Rag rug 0. .25

2 wooling wheels	0. .75
a Reel	0. .08
weavers sleigh	1. .00
1 Loom & c	1. .50
2 Wheels	0. .50
4 tabel Cloths, 14 Napkins, 8½ pr sheets	3. .50
23 pillow Cases	2. .30
3 Check blankets	7. .50

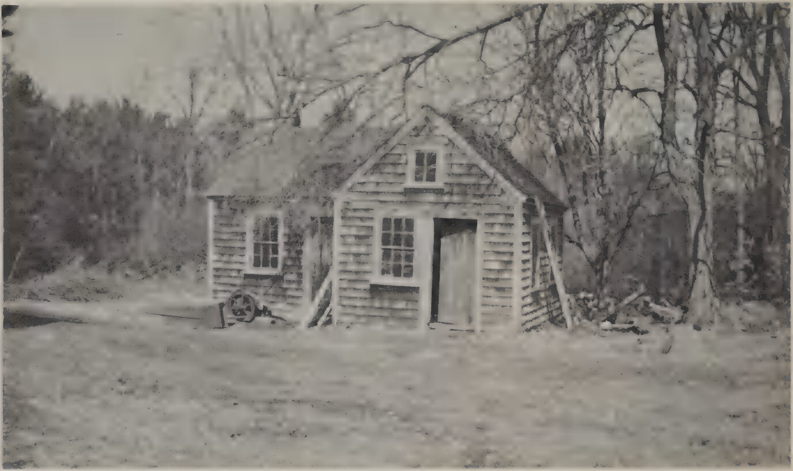
By the early nineteenth century even those who grew their own flax and raised their own sheep, had some of the work of preparing yarn done outside the home. On July 16, 1816, Benajah Barns of Boxford, a weaver, and Winthrop Lamon of Middleton signed an agreement to join in the business of getting wool carded for home weaving. Winthrop Lamon lived in a house that stood where Middleton's public library is now located and where he had a shop. This was to be the headquarters of the operation. The document reads in part:

> the above said Winthrop Lamon is to receive into his custody all the wool that shall be delivered to him at his shop in Middleton for the purpose of being conveyed from the said Land to the carding mill and the aforesaid Barns is to pay to said Lamon for storeing said wool and roles and for collecting the money of those persons who shall have wool carded the sum of fifteen per c upon all the money received for carding said wool.

This business was of brief duration and is mentioned only as an instance of the gradual removal of a home craft to the mill. Already, just over the line in what is now Peabody, the Danvers Cotton Factory in 1812 was carding and spinning by machinery and very shortly would be performing all the operations of making cloth. It is true that many young women were still filling their hope chests with linens woven on their own looms.

CHAPTER VI NOTES

1. Frances Little, *Early American Textiles*, N. Y., 1931.
2. Albert Bushnell Hart, *Commonwealth History of Massachusetts*, 1929, III, 319.
3. Francis Everett Blake, *History of the Town of Princeton*, 1915, I, 302.
4. William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley, D. D.*, Salem, 1905-1914, I, 143.
5. David Stiles, "Middleton," *History of Essex County, Massachusetts*, D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., Philadelphia, 1888.



Shoe shop of John Curtis is still standing on the Curtis Place, Peabody Street.

CHAPTER VII

Shoemaking

In the eighteenth century shoemaking was done at home or by leather workers who traveled about as they were needed. One member of a family, perhaps, learned the shoemaker's craft, carrying on his activities in the dull seasons of farming or in the long winter evenings. In Middleton he was able to buy skins from a local tanner — Elijah Wilkins. Wilkins died in 1780. A list of stock found in the inventory of his possessions shows that he utilized the hides of various farm animals:

twenty seven Sides of upper Leather 7/6 per side 10. 2. 6
Sixteen sides of So [Sole] Leather 15/perside 12. 0. 0
Seventeen calf Skines 4/6 per skin 3. 16. 0
Sheep skins 6/
two Hog skins 3/
a small horse hide 4/6
twelve hides in the fats 18/ per hide 10. 16. 0
six Calf Skins in the fats 6/ per skin 01. 16. 0
one calf Skin curried and some Small Skirts of upper Leather 12/

A "tan Barn" is also mentioned.

Wilkins was not only a currier or dresser of leather; he was also a cordwainer, or "cordwinder," as was his son Elijah. The inventory lists his shoemaker's lasts, pincers, "nipers," rasps, a gimlet, a "birning" [burnishing] knife, and tools to make wooden heels.

Once supplied with leather the workman could apply himself to making shoes for the whole family, or he could send for a traveling craftsman who would live in the house until his work was done. This activity was usually carried on in the winter. The shoemaker placed his seat near the open fireplace, wearing knee boards to protect his legs from the excessive heat. One by one the children were measured for their shoes, with care to allow plenty of room for growth, but with little attempt at accurate fit.

The first effort to establish shoemaking as a business in the vicinity of Middleton came about in 1792, when Moses Putnam of Danvers built what was called a "factory." It was, however, a factory without machines and was indeed little more than an enlargement of the small shoe shops that had already begun to appear on the farms. In the state tax list for Middleton, dated 1798, six of these shops with the names of their owners and the dimensions of the buildings are noted. They belonged to Solomon and Nathaniel Gould, Joseph Knight, John Nichols, Benjamin Peabody, David Russell, and Elijah Wilkins, mentioned above. The largest of these was the Nichols shop, sixteen feet by twelve, and the smallest the one owned by Wilkins, eight feet square. These little buildings used to be referred to as "ten-footers," but obviously their dimensions varied. Wilkins, the tanner's son, lived on the Edward Putnam, Jr., farm from 1792 to 1805. The house had been occupied for twenty-six years previous to 1784 by another cordwainer, Enos Knight, and was the home of a second shoemaking Wilkins in the mid-nineteenth century.

Only three of Middleton's shoe shops are still standing and recognizable as such.

One, at the Curtis farm on Peabody Street, has been used as a workshop; another, back of the Currier house on South Main Street, is an interesting example with an entry and two rooms. A shop on the old Flint homestead about two miles west of the center, has recently been demolished; it was used for a time as a schoolroom.

Although the appearance and equipment of these shops varied from time to time, a great deal about them remained the same over the years. Familiar to everyone is the shoemaker's seat (often referred to as a bench), with its convenient slots for tools and small drawers for pegs, tacks, and other little things. As the shop owner sometimes rented space to other workmen, there were usually from two to four seats.

The early shoemaker, using a short, heavy hammer, had to prepare his leather by pounding it on a lapstone to an even thickness. Later on, skins were rolled in a factory. The lapstone was a large smooth beach stone, highly valued by its owner, and sometimes marked with his initials. The stirrup, which provided a foothold for steadying the last held in front of the worker, was another important item. Early lasts were sized for length, but not for width, which had to be regulated in cutting by the use of an "instep leather," adjustable to full or slim sizes. Rights and lefts were unknown for many years.

The shoes of the eighteenth century were made by hand stitching.

This was an operation that required some preparation and a great deal of patience. Needles were not generally used, but the thread was waxed and thereby attached to a bristle ("brussell") that carried it through the holes previously made by an awl. The preparation of the wax, especially on a cold morning, when the shoemaker or his apprentice had perhaps spent twenty minutes or so trying to light the shop fireplace or stove by means of flint and steel, was a matter of some difficulty. The wax was compounded of rosin, thoroughly melted, to which grease was added until it reached the proper consistency. The thread was coated with the heated mixture, but the wax often became brittle in the cold so that it flew off and had to be remelted.

Pegged shoes were first made in the late eighteenth century and continued in use until after the Civil War. In Danvers the shoemakers carried on with southern planters a regular business of making pegged shoes for their slaves. These were shipped in barrels from Boston. The southerners, always dependent on crops, were given long-term credits, sometimes with disastrous consequences to the Danvers men. It is probable that many of the shoes made for the factory trade in Middleton were sent south. However, surviving examples indicate that the townspeople also wore pegged shoes, which were less expensive than those sewn by hand.

At first each shoemaker made his own pegs from crosswise sections of wood scored deeply for easy splitting. A peg cutter could be purchased for the purpose. After a time, peg making became a business in itself. There was actually a factory in Danvers where pegs were made in great quantities and stored away in the large round boxes that had brought sugar from the West Indies. At this time pegs could be bought at the local store for six cents a quart.

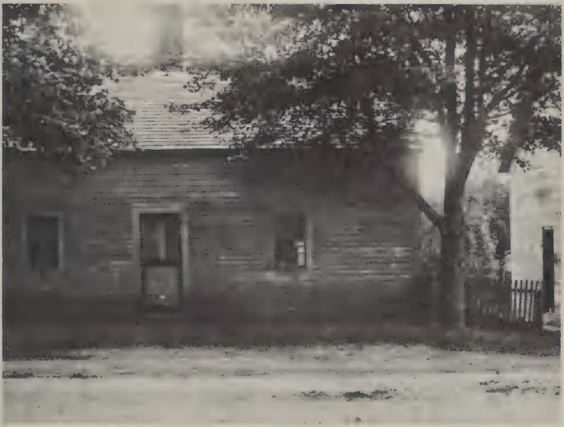
A shoemaker's "kit" or equipment included a great variety of tools, although the less prosperous workmen seem to have got along with few, and some of those makeshift or improvised. Knives were important. There were skivers for shaving and splitting leather, paring knives, knives for heels, and so on. When a shoemaker had a favorite knife he often used it until it was worn down to the haft. Pincers or nippers were employed for pulling the uppers into position while tacking them to the sole. The implements had hammer-like ends so that the pulling and tacking could be done without changing tools. Shoulder sticks made of wood or metal were short pieces with a section or sections notched out near the end; they were used for smoothing and burnishing the edges of the soles. Metal shoulder sticks, which could be heated to give a better polish, were considered an improvement. An unusual example made of soapstone for heavy work may be seen in the large collection of shoe tools belonging to the Middleton Historical Society. "Long·sticks" were intended for burnishing the surface of the leather. They were beautifully made of lignum vitae, a very hard wood, were perhaps ten inches in length, and were comparatively expensive. As they sometimes came equipped with an inset section of carborundum for whetting, it appears that the wooden surface, too, was used to put a fine edge on a tool. A variety of awls and scrapers was essential. These implements were carefully kept in place by each workman.

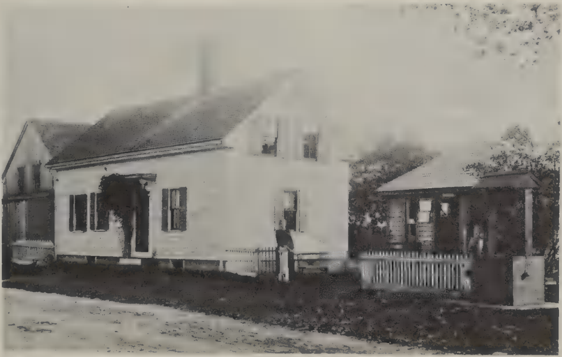
A shoeshop, however, was not a clean or orderly place. What with pegs, tacks, bristles, sponges, paste horns, chalk, blacking, grease, rags, and sandpaper, and the stifling odors of leather, tobacco smoke, burning whale oil, heated rosin, grease, and wax, and several none-too-clean workmen in a small space, a shoeshop was hardly a bower of roses.

The advent of the shop as a fixed place for the equipment of the business seems to mark the beginning of the era that took shoemaking out of the home. Nevertheless, the craft continued to be carried on in upper rooms, sheds, or other outbuildings until the very end of the industry. In the heyday of the business some kind of workplace would have been found at almost every house in town.

The factory system of giving out materials to be made up at home or in the small shop began in Middleton in the 1830's. As nearly as I can determine, the first effort in this direction was made by Elias T. Ingalls, father of John James Ingalls, who attained fame as an orator and United States senator from Kansas. It was a short-lived venture, concluded before 1835. At that time Middleton was a very small town indeed, with a population of less than seven hundred. According to John Warner Barber, the inhabitants lived "scattered over the town, there being no village of importance." In 1837, after Ingalls had moved to Haverhill, the yearly output of boots and shoes was only five hundred pairs, and the only factory of any kind in town was a paper mill.

Coincident with the revival of business in the next decade, we have some interesting details from an account book kept at the factory and store of Wilkins and Merriam.[1] They were the first Middleton men to buy supplies at wholesale to be made up in the homes and shops and to run a store where various commodities could be obtained in lieu of cash payment. In the years 1844 and 1845, sixty-four men are named in this ledger as making shoes, while nearly forty women did work "fitting" them — that is, stitching the uppers. This comes rather close to the estimate in the 1845 census that seventy-five men and seventy-five women were then employed in Middleton in the shoe business. In that year 75,645 pairs were made, valued at $35,647. Judging by these figures the shoes must have been sold at less than fifty cents a pair.





First house on section of Maple Street west of the Church.
Built by Oliver White, a shoemaker, in 1825.

Type of small house built near the center in the mid-1800'S. Owned by Mrs. Sarah (Stiles), Conlan. Shop in the yard run by her daughter Polly.

It is difficult in these days of plentiful money to grasp in terms of wages and purchasing power the actual values represented in the Wilkins and Merriam account. Men were allowed ten cents a pair for making shoes; women received but four cents a pair for stitching. Yet we cannot doubt that the women especially were only too glad to get a dollar after sitting up nights to fit tweny-five pairs of shoes. Never before had they had the opportunity to earn anything whatsoever, and that dollar more than covered the cost of a new dress or a hat. In fairness to the women, let it be said that they rarely bought anything except necessities — candles, whale oil, or food — and they probably did the work on account of the pressing needs of their families.

The fact that women were beginning to earn money of their own had an immediate effect on social conditions in Middleton. Anyone who has studied the vital statistics of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries will know that the young people of that time rarely married before they were twenty-four or older, when the young man had learned his trade and was sufficiently established to support a family. Now we find them marrying when they were barely twenty — the girls often in their teens. Obviously, the industrial era was bringing a feeling of security and hope.

As we examine the list of tools and equipment bought by the shoemakers at the Wilkins store, it looks as if the barter system gave them the little end of the deal. A long stick cost fifty cents, the pay for making five pairs of shoes. A hammer cost eighty-three cents, or eight pairs of shoes, two quarts of oil, fifty-six cents. Shoulder sticks were from thirty to seventy-five cents, a set of lasts eighty-eight cents; a heel cutter, twenty cents, an ounce of "brussells," twenty cents. The citizens had no other choice of market. In 1845, as in 1967, Middleton was eight miles from a railroad.

Perusal of the store account gives a better understanding of how these people not only made both ends meet, but had a few luxuries as well. Coffee was only nine cents a pound, eggs about a cent apiece, cheese eight cents a pound, butter eighteen, flour five dollars a barrel. Calico cloth was regularly twelve and one-half cents a yard; an umbrella could be had for thirty-three cents, and a pair of "overhalls" for sixty-two. A horse blanket could be bought for eighty-three cents, a stove for six dollars; six bunches of cigars cost thirty-seven cents, a pair of kid gloves sixty-seven; and a silk handkerchief was a luxury at one dollar and a quarter. The hire of a wagon to go to Salem and Beverly was only forty cents.

The meager earnings of the shoemaker did not, of course, always represent his entire income. Rather they were by way of additional funds, for many workmen were also farmers, or at least had vegetable gardens that supplied a large part of their needs. It was even possible to save money and buy houses. Fortunately, the cost of a home was in line with small earnings. A one-and-one-half-story house with three rooms on the ground floor and chambers under the roof could be built for $400. Many houses of this type were put up in Middleton in the period 1845 to 1855. Quaint and cozy, they still line the town's main streets and once again are in demand for small famiiles. Shoemaking was carried on in or near almost every one of them.

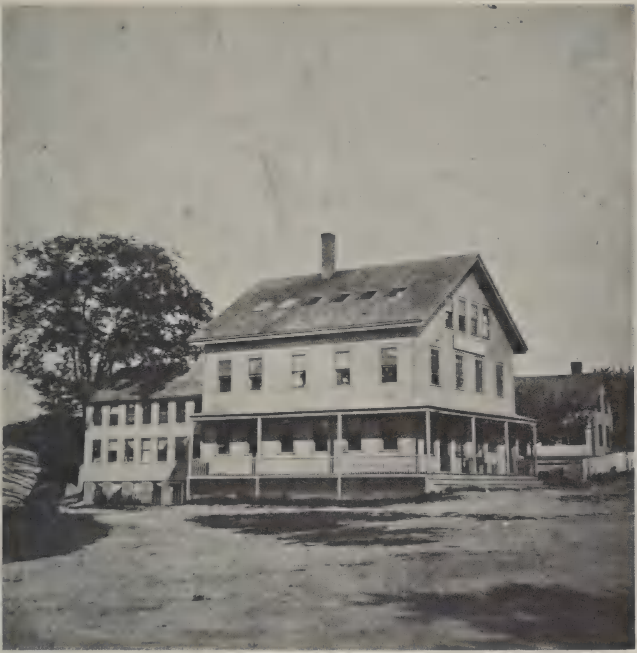
The changeover to factory methods began in the 1850's when Francis P. Merriam put up the large wooden structure that still stands under later rebuilding at the corner of Main and Lake Streets. Associated with him were his brothers James W. and William A., and the firm was known as F. P. Merriam & Co. During the next ten years no less than half a dozen other smaller concerns had "shoe manufactories," some of them in conjunction with a store. Three were in Middleton Square, two on Maple Street, at either side of the town hall, and one near Howe Station at the eastern end of town.

This sudden expansion of industry was doubtless the result of the building from Salem to Lawrence of the Essex Railroad, which ran directly through Middleton. The Merriam factory was but a city block's distance from the railroad station, reached through a short wood road, and near enough to facilitate the delivery of hides and the shipment of shoes to Boston.

The factories employed workmen in their buildings handling stock and cutting soles ("bottoms"), uppers, linings, and other parts, but their primary function at first seems to have been merely to serve as supply houses for the shoemakers, who continued to work in their own shops. Sets of stock, each containing the materials needed for five dozen pairs of shoes, were given out, and the shoemaker, working at his own speed, returned the finished shoes for which he was paid (1858) fourteen cents a pair for the making. In 1855, 165 men and 140 women were thus employed in Middleton, producing annually 180,000 pairs of shoes worth $117,000.[2]

In June 1859, the Essex Institute had a field meeting in Middleton. The secretary's report[3] says that the company was "set down from the train about noon in what seems to a stranger to be a mere nook cut out in the middle of the forest with hardly a building in sight." A short walk took them to the village green, which he describes as "only a convenient spot from which to study the signs of several shoe manufactories and country stores." The only attraction for visitors in this little town was the pond and a ruined gristmill.

Francis P. Merriam, son of Dr. Silas, who brought industry to Middleton when he built his large shoe factory in 1853.



F. P. Merriam shoe factory in the 1870's.

A delightful daybook and diary kept by George B. Flint, who made shoes in Middleton from 1853 to 1866, gives what is perhaps a unique picture of the life of a shoeworker.[4] It gives us glimpses of his trials and tribulations, his joys and pleasures, as well as being an authentic account of every detail of his trade. The journal begins shortly after his marriage to "Caddie," or Carrie, Phelps, daughter of Dr. Ebenezer Phelps, the town's physician. In 1853 the couple were evidently living in the doctor's house on North Main Street. From January to June Flint gradually bought the tools and outfit necessary to equip a shop. He acquired some patterns and a shoulder stick; later, sandpaper and a buffer, two awls at two cents apiece, a name stamp that cost ninety cents for marking his shoes, a "heel piece," which had to be set, at a cost of a dollar and a quarter; then tacks, buffing combs, a hammer, lasts, and, in April, calf skin and lamb leather for $5.46. He also obtained another skin, binding leather and a hank of linen thread from Hutchinson, whose factory or shop was in the square.

(At this point George remarks with apparent relish that Mrs. Merriam was spoken to in Meeting for reading.)

Congress boots with rubber sides had just come into style, so George bought patterns for them and enough rubber cloth to make six pairs. He records selling a pair of shoes for $4.75, a sum that he squandered in part on a pair of French calf boots for himself. On June 6, he sold sixteen pairs of buskins to another shoemaker for $10.30. Buskins, a soft slipper-like shoe without heels, made of either cloth or leather, were very popular with elderly people. It is pleasant to know that on this same day in June George went to see the Siamese twins. On June 16 he records that he had "Commenced to work at the shoe business."

Flint mentions little shoemaking activity during the summer, but, as October came around, he planned for the short dark afternoons by buying three quarts of fluid for his shop. Burning fluid was the preferred light fuel in the 1850's, superseding the more costly whale oil of the previous decade. Its cost was twenty cents for a quart, whereas the regular price for whale oil had been twenty-five cents or more.

The Flints' first child arrived on December 19. One could hardly surpass for brevity his entry: "Born at ten o'clock P.M." Two days later we find "Cradle — $2.50." On this date he went to Lynn and bought "for Co." a piece of shoe duck, two dozen kid skins, and one hundred pounds of shoulders. The "company" appears to have been his brother-in-law, Reuel Phelps, who moved to Andover in February, selling his house to George. From this time until warm weather he worked steadily at shoemaking, recording what he accomplished each day. Although he had to spend some time in cutting and fitting, he was usually able to make from four to eight pairs of women's shoes or goat buskins daily. His average earnings were certainly less than one dollar a day, and yet, persons who remember the family say they were comfortably situated and always well dressed. Flint could afford a carpet for his new house at the low price of twenty-five cents a yard, and he was able to hire a man to saw wood for the shop.

When warm weather came, our shoemaker farmed and went to work as a mason with his brother Sylvanus. He mentions laying a chimney at the schoolhouse, whitewashing the depot, and lathing in the Merriam shoe factory. Masons then as now commanded high wages. By October he paid $200 on his house. Flint eventually abandoned his shoemaking for this trade.

July 4, 1854, George records that the thermometer stood at 104°. That did not prevent his spending the day hoeing beans and helping Dr. Phelps get in his hay.

In this year he first mentions "cacks." Cacks were shoes for little children who wore sizes one to eight. Here we may well digress to say a word about the kinds of shoes made in Middleton at the period. As in Lynn, where many of the shoes were marketed, the output was almost wholly for women and children. In the 1850's George Flint records making buskins, boots and shoes for women, and shoes for misses. The boots were of kid or goat skin, and some were Congress boots. Other styles were "front lace Polkys boots," low laced boots of kid or goat, "Prodie" boots, and what George called "Jenny Lynn." He first speaks of heels in 1858. These had just been revived after a period dating from about 1830, when the spring heel was abandoned for no heel at all. About 1855 the swing of fashion brought a demand for heels once more. Flint made spring-heel shoes and buskins in 1860, but does not mention them again.

Five years later he went to work as a cutter in the Wilkins shop. He notes cutting sets of the following styles: child's *split H. Bel;* men's buff slippers and calf slippers; misses' *ankleth* (ankle length?); women's and misses' *P. G. Ball* and *pebble grain;* misses' *Good Templars;* misses' and children's *end ball;* women's *Polish grain* and *pen grain* scallop shoes; and again cacks.

Going back to the diary in 1855, we find that George was then buying his stock of leather and shoe duck (for linings) in Lynn. The finished sets he sold in part to the local Merriam factory and partly to a firm in Boston. At that time, sixty pounds of "soale" leaher cost him $95.70 and ninety-seven pounds of leather $87.27.

He worked steadily through January and February cutting, lining, fitting, and packing his finished sets in cases that he obtained at the factory. In March he notes that he was almost sick with a cold. He got over this with the aid of six-and-a-half cents' worth of cough candy and was then busier than ever. He speaks of five other shoemakers who worked in his shop that spring. His recreations were few and simple — an occasional evening meeting and one a "musick" lecture given by Hiram Stiles, a local enthusiast. The really exciting event of the year came in June when George went to Salem to see an exhibition of glass blowing. He came back with a globe as a memento. The last entry of that year is dated August 12, a Sunday. With his brother-in-law Horace Phelps, he "went up to pond and went in and washed and got some Lilies."

In 1856 another baby came along and Flint worked unceasingly with the other men in his shop. During this year he did business with Crosby in Andover. His activities were little varied except when a circus came to town in June or when he went to see the wild men of Borneo in September. In that month he also attended a Franklin celebration in Boston. Ice cream was enough of a novelty in his life to prompt his making special mention of eating it with a friend in Salem.

Life was not all circuses, however. Flint seems to have enjoyed reading of a solid kind. He bought a life of Washington, which no doubt lay on the center table beside a family Bible he had purchased the year before at a cost of $3.75. In those days a family Bible in the proper place was a symbol of a man's standing in the community comparable to the ownership of a television set today. George was one of the first to "put down" his name to have a library in town.

The winter of 1857 was extremely cold. Between January 18 and January 26 the thermometer registered thirteen below zero, twenty below, then twenty-one, six, and eighteen below, while on the nineteenth occurred the "hardest storm within the memory of this generation." These figures were hard to believe until we had a week like it in Middleton just one hundred years later. During this cold snap Flint puttered around his shop, but does not record that he accomplished much more than grinding knives and fixing his bench stool. In spite of the cold, the family went to meeting. In the spring there was a "levee" at the town hall. George helped to trim the room for the occasion, which must have been an exciting break in his routine. Another break occurred with the arrival of a third baby.

A change in the family life took place in the spring of 1858 when George Flint decided to move over to his mother's farm two miles away to work it on shares with his brother. This was a real upheaval, involving three or four trips with loads of furniture. The diary was not kept during a busy summer, except that in September he notes pulling and thrashing beans and peas, winnowing beans, picking apples, husking corn, chopping wood, and churning. With the advent of cold weather he went over to Middleton for a set of stock and began shoemaking operations again in the old shop across the road. From January to April of that year he had already made 450 pairs of shoes for the Merriam company. This had brought him $75.60.

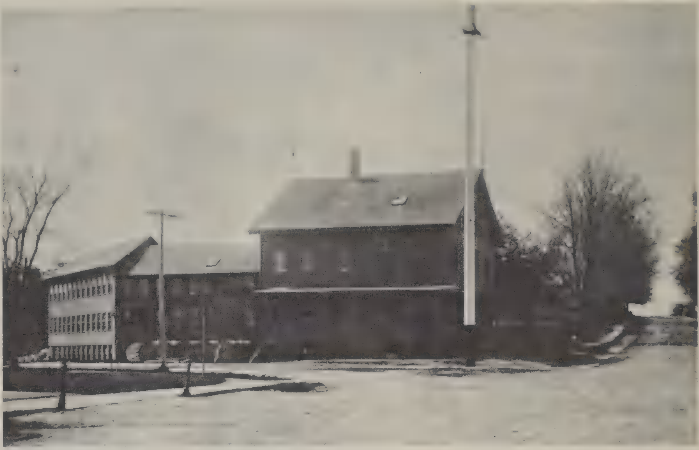
After a year on the farm and with another baby on the way, the family moved back to their home on North Main Street. It needed some renovation. In March George "went to Danvers and got some lumber, paint and paper & c to fix up my house which cost $4.22." More paint and varnish were required to do over the kitchen. He finished papering one room himself, but got a certain John to put on the border. Carpets were laid in the "cetching" and front chamber. The former, probably an oil cloth, he varnished. Curtain fixtures and more carpeting at forty-five cents a yard completed the expenditures, and the Flints were able to move in before May.

During that summer George worked at his mason's trade in a house and in the new church. He notes that he helped to raise the bell on the meetinghouse and that he subscribed twenty dollars to the fund for the building. His shoemaking was carried on again when November came around, and he was occupied with it through the winter. An event that he thought worth mentioning was that Caddie in January went to Salem and bought a velvet bonnet.

In reading this account, one is impressed with the independence of the workman. He was his own master. When the Pemberton mill in Lawrence burned with a horrible loss of life, Flint took the first train next morning to see the ruins and did not return until the last one at night. Nevertheless, he worked hard, receiving as time went on a slightly larger recompense. In May 1860 he sold three cases of shoes to Merriam at ninety cents a pair. He now occasionally hired other workmen to do his binding. In this year he began to cut his own sole leather at Henry Wilkins' factory, where there were, no doubt, superior facilities.

Another baby, the fifth, born in September, kept his nose ever nearer the grindstone. On this occasion he notes that he was sick all night with "Col morbus," and that he loafed around next day after the arrival of the infant in the early morning hours. George was justifiably worried. He now had to spend considerable time making shoes for Frank and Fred and Laura, not to speak of those for himself and Caddie.

There is little joy in the daybook in the next few years. Although George Flint was rarely ill, he now began to show the strain of overwork. On one occasion he cut off the end of his finger and on another he jammed his finger in the molding machine — a serious injury. He worked after these accidents, but was obliged to loaf for a time after the



The Merriam factory in the 1890's. Note horsehead hitching posts installed in front of Library in 1892 and the wooden sidewalk on North Main Street.

second one.

His notes for May 1863 give the feeling of spring, but with the weariness of a man who worked almost incessantly without a vacation.

"May 8 — Carrie and I went to Salem and Bot cloth for boys cloathes. Bot some yellow dishes.

27 - finished plating garden cleared out cellar and *took of undershirt* pleasant all day.

29 — putting down carpets in forenoon afternoon made one pair of shoes
June 9 — 6th Baby born at 20 min. of 2 in morning."

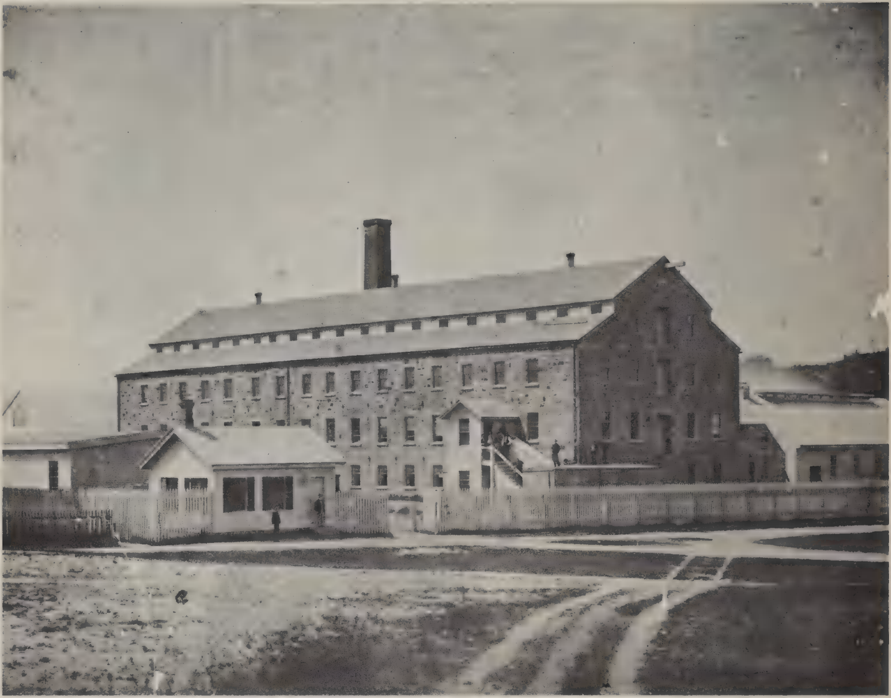
In January 1866, George Flint went to work as a cutter in the Hutchinson factory. He does not say how many hours he put in each day, but they may have been many. In a small factory in Danvers at this time men labored from seven in the morning to eight at night, except on Saturday, when the shop closed at five. There were no vacations and only three holidays in the year — Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and Fast Day. After George's fifth day at Hutchinson's he says that he had had a headache nearly all day. This was different from the not unpleasant life in his little shop, where he and the other men could talk politics and rest when they pleased. After a month or so he gave up shoemaking and devoted himself to his trade as a mason.

The growth of shoemaking as an industry led to several related local developments. A local man, Farnham Stiles, who had been making shoes since he was sixteen years old, worked out and invented in his own shop a number of short cuts for the trade. First he devised a pegging jack, which he made himself and sold in the nearby towns. Then he made dies for use in cutting out heels and soles, thereby eliminating hand work, and he produced name stamps for marking shoes. He was less successful with a corrugated heel burnisher that he tried to patent, for it was already known. Stiles was just one more example of Yankee ingenuity. A knife factory started by Samuel A. Cummings in 1849 was another direct outgrowth of the shoe business.

By the 1860's shoemaking as a family occupation was on the way out, supplanted by huge factories where every step in the manufacture was performed by machines.

CHAPTER VII NOTES

1. Merriam & Wilkins, *Account Book,* in Middleton Historical Society Collections.
2. *Statistical Information Relating to Certain Branches of Industry in Massachusetts, For the Year ending June* 1, 1855, Boston, 1856.
3. *Proceedings of the Essex Institute,* II, 380.
4. George B. Flint, *Diary,* owned by Harry R. Woodward.



130 Paper Mill, South Middleton, burned July 13, 1871

CHAPTER VIII

Some Other Industries

THE PAPER MILLS

The two most important industries that have ever flourished in Middleton are the paper mill founded by Col. Francis Peabody of Salem on the Ipswich River at South Middleton and its successor in more modern times, the B. B. Chemical Company, under the ownership of the United Shoe Machinery Company.

John Flint, the last of the family to own the old Flint Mills, sold the buildings, dam, and water rights, with five acres of land, to Peabody on February 25, 1832, for $3000 (264-59). Francis Peabody was the son of Salem's Joseph Peabody, whose early ambitions to become a millionaire had been realized several times over as the result of his extensive shipping interests. During the thirties Francis engagd in various manufactures. He had a refinery in South Salem for the production of sperm and whale oil and the manufacture of sperm candles, and is said to have purchased $100,000 worth of sperm oil and $50,000 worth of whale oil in one year. He introduced a machine for braiding candle wicking and made the first candles of the kind.

In Middleton Col. Peabody built his paper mill beside the old dam. Not much is known about the kind of paper he produced, except that it was of fine quality for books and other printing.

After a few years he began to make linseed oil in another building he had erected. This manufacture involved large shipments of flaxseed from Europe and India. In 1841 he chartered a ship for the purpose — the *Gen. Harrison* — and he purchased another, the *Isaac Hicks.* In the following year he acquired the *New Jersey,* said to have been the largest ship ever to discharge a cargo in Salem. The refuse of his oil manufacture was shipped to London in the form of a kind of seed cake that was fed to cattle.

The presence of these new activities on the far edge of town changed the little country neighborhood. Several new families moved in, and within two years there were twenty-four children of school age. As the youngsters had to travel a long distance to the schoolhouse in the center, the community petitioned for the organization of a new school district. They themselves offered to put up a building if the town would pay forty dollars a year for its support. The measure was voted May 5, 1843, and a little schoolhouse was built on the Flints' land on Boston Street not far from the North Reading road.

Although there is no reason to believe that Col. Peabody's ventures were unsuccessful — he had run them for nine years — he nevertheless conveyed the entire property to Zenas and Luther Crane and Benjamin F. Martin of Newton Lower Falls for $10,000 on December 7, 1843 (340-250). The Cranes were the forerunners of the present makers of Crane papers and they were to manufacture paper in Middleton for nearly thirty years. An interesting clause in their deed concerned the water rights. It stipulated that "when the owners of the mills at North Reading are forming a pond they shall not shut down their gates while the water in the river is so low that the supply is lost by evaporation and when the pond is emptied by them in the spring it shall be done gradually." As will be seen, however, low water was one of the plagues of the mill in the early days.

During the Peabody occupation and probably well along under the Crane management, the paper mill depended wholly on hand operations. The art of making paper in those days is described as being slow and laborious. The first half of the process was to reduce the rags to a mass of the finest fiber. Without machinery this had to be accomplished by pounding the fabrics in a mortar until they were thoroughly separated. Later, the preparation of the fibers took place in machines run by water power, where the mass of material was beaten, soaked, and bleached for weeks until it came out as a fluffy white substance referred to as "stuff."

By any method it was necessary to cleanse the rags and macerate them as finely as possible. Linen rags were used by preference and they produced the best paper, which is still strong after more than a century, while modern pulp paper disintegrates after a comparatively brief period.

The prepared fiber was mixed with water in a vat. In hand papermaking this was removed in a quantity sufficient to make one sheet by means of a mold or frame covered with a wire mesh or screen. This was dipped under the mass of fiber and brought out, leaving a coating on the mesh. Surrounding the frame was a removable edge, or "deckle," to control the quantity of stuff in the mold. The workman shook the mold gently to distribute the material evenly and to permit the water to drain away. This was the beginning of a sheet of paper.

When he had removed the deckle, the papermaker handed the mold to an assistant and went on repeating the process. The helper tipped the coated side of the mesh on to a felt of the same size and pressed the fibers against it. A new felt was then laid over this one and then a new layer of fiber. After a considerable pile had been made, the whole was subjected to a gentle squeezing in a press to force out the excess water. Each soft sheet was then removed to another felt and the pressing repeated until the fibers were matted ever more firmly together. Finally they were pressed without the felts and were then carefully lifted away to be dried over ropes or poles, for weeks, if necessary. The paper in a completed state was of a size conforming to the measurements of the molds.

A machine to gather the fiber from the vats in a continuous strip was an improvement over the tedious business of hand dipping, but when it was introduced in Middleton is not known. It is probable that the only mechanisms in the early days of the mill were those for beating and washing the fiber, and they depended on the Ipswich River for power.

This Middleton industry was a small one at first. With only three employees (the owners themselves, perhaps) they reported to the *Statistics of the Industry of Massachusetts* in 1845 that they were producing 188,000 pounds of paper, valued at $20,592, in one year. In 1855 the Cranes reported six employees and an output of 25,000 dollars worth of paper. Ten years later, with seven men and three women at work, they turned out one hundred tons of printing paper of the same value.

The opening of the Salem & Lowell Rail Road on August 1, 1850, was of great advantage to the paper industry and to the South Middleton community. The railroad station, known first as Oakdale and later as South Middleton, was built on the paper mill land. Freight for shipment to any point could be loaded at its very doors. The road connected with the main line at Wilmington, so that a transfer of goods or a business trip to Boston were easy matters. Three trains were run daily in each direction and the carfare from Salem to Lowell was only sixty cents.

Up to this time not a great deal is known about what went on in the paper mill. In 1867, however, we have some real evidence from the diary of Sylvanus Flint,[1] son of the last owner of the Flint mills, who lived across the way and who worked for a while making paper and being generally useful in the factory.

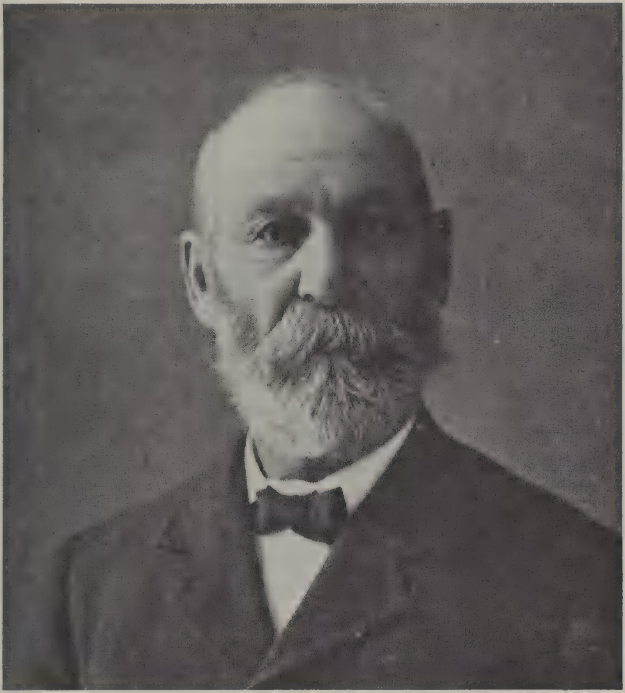
An excellent product was manufactured during these years after the Civil War. Henry Wheatland, speaking at a field meeting of the Essex Institute,[2] held at the paper mills August 5, 1869, informed the group that the paper for William B. Prescott's *History of Ferdinand and Isa-*

bella was made at Middleton expressly for the book and that it "was considered a very superior article." Between January and May, 1867, Flint records making sugar paper, blue paper (probably the same — used for wrapping cones of sugar), carpet paper, yellow, blue, pink, buff, and salmon poster paper, green and blue curtain paper, manilla roll, and hangings of white, salmon, or patterned. His work hours were incredible. He often mentions getting up at midnight or at three or four o'clock in the morning and carrying on all day at the mill. For this he was paid forty dollars a month.

There were many emergencies. On January 17, the "most severe snowstorm in many years" dropped two feet of snow. The train was stuck in the drifts and remained there over night. The next day the water in the river was so low the mill could not run, so Sylvanus Flint with others worked nine hours shoveling snow. Next day another storm blocked the highways and railroad, although the "cars" got through in the afternoon with three engines. Back at work our diarist records taking the pump to pieces at the factory and adding a bolt, which did not improve matters. Almost daily he "drawed" tons of paper to the railroad. When the pump broke again he took it to Middleton to be repaired, but in spite of such attentions it finally blew up in his face and burned him. Surely the old mill hands had an eventful existence. Flint notes many other chores, such as washing out the machinery or renewing the felts, and sometimes he went to the works at night to start the furnace or to fuss with the machinery. This did not prevent his being on hand at five-thirty in the morning. In May he got caught in the gears, ending his writing for the summer and his regular work in the paper mill for good. For his last month's work he was paid sixty dollars.

On July 13, 1871, the paper mill burned with the loss of nearly ten thousand dollars worth of stock. A photograph of the old building shows that it was a sizeable factory. Its loss led Luther Crane to sell the land and remaining buildings to Stephen O. Crane, who had long been manager of the works. He must have rebuilt the factory, for in 1874 he was able to get $23,000 for the property in a sale to William Ripley of Lawrence (901-180). Ripley was buying for his sons, who set up in business there as Ripley Bros. Their tenure was brief, however, for in 1882 they became insolvent, and the foreclosure of a mortgage held by Jerome A. Bacon, a paper manufacturer of Lawrence, spelled finis to the Ripley concern. At auction the paper mill brought only $2100. J. A. Bacon was the actual owner and operator for a time and he made numerous improvements.

Sylvanus Flint at this time was living by his trade as a skilled brickmason. During the spring of 1883 he helped to clean up and repair the



Sylvanus Flint in his later years.

mill. In the summer he laid the foundation for a new building, built its chimney, and set a hot water tank. By September the repairwork was finished, but new construction went on. He combined his masonry with a return to papermaking. He mentions blue blotting paper and blue sugar paper. The product was shipped to Boston and New York, and carloads of fiber were sent to Philadelphia and to other paper manufacturers, such as the Wheelwright Paper Company in North Leominster and the Nonetuck Paper Company in Holyoke.

The interest in these operations lies perhaps more in Sylvanus Flint himself than in their comparative importance. Nowhere is an old-time Yankee better exemplified than in the diary entries made by this man who could and would turn his hand to being useful in any direction. His faithfulness and loving care are shown in his note, January 2, 1884, that he had "put some pieces of zinc over the lamps in the mill to protect the chimneys."

On December 19, 1885, J. A. Bacon and his then partner, Henry B. Furbish, conveyed the works to Edward J. Hickey (1165-148). Under Hickey's ownership the mill once more regained stability, and it was running as late as 1908 and perhaps longer.

A clipping from *The Salem Evening News* dated December 1, 1894, says: says: "Business at the paper mill is very brisk at the present time. The mill is running day and night. The firm manufacturers wall paper, of which 30,000 rolls are turned out daily. There are about 100 hands employed in the mill and print works." Another item, March 16, 1896, notes that "the Middleton Paper mill is the only mill in the United States where wall paper is made and printed under the same roof." On April 4, 1896, the News records that "The average amount of wall paper which is run through the print works daily at the Middleton Paper mill, is thirty-five thousand rolls."

A sample of the product at this period is owned by the Middleton Historical Society. It is an imitation flock paper, crimson in color, and of rather poor quality. *Middleton Paper Co.* is stamped on the margin of the roll.

The later history of the concern shows it given over to other purposes. For a time it was a leather finishing factory, and in the nineteen-twenties it was owned by the Essex Aniline Company, a dyeing establishment. From them it was purchased by the Boston Blacking Company in 1928. Known as the B. B. Chemical Company, it is now part of the United Shoe Machinery Company.

SOAPMAKING

Anyone who has lived to the age of seventy-five will remember the "old soap" man who used to call at the house periodically to collect the family grease in partial payment for a long thick bar of yellow soap. This was cut in cakes and served all kitchen purposes. "Davis's Old Soap," a well-known concern in the towns around Boston and probably the last to do business near the city, was but the descendant of a long line whose existence and activities are now lost in the haze of long ago.

The earliest Middleton man mentioned in this connection is one S. Mackentire, who was thus occupied in 1812. He was probably Simeon Mackentire, who married Emma Wright in Middleton in 1795, and was presumably carrying on his business thereafter.

The account book of Amos Batchelder,[3] owner of the Estey Tavern in the forties and fifties, notes buying barrels of soft soap and selling grease to a number of men — Robertson, Goodwin, and Stanton, all probably from out of town. In 1849 he was trading with William Pike of Andover, buying a barrel of soft soap and six bars of hard, and getting credit for grease and thirty-seven barrels of ashes. In the latter part of 1850 he was doing business with "Mr. Jefferson." It appears that this new soap man was Perry Madison Jefferson,[4] who manufactured soap at Mr. Pike's place in Andover from 1850 to 1854. The son of Roswell and Cynthia (Fish) Jefferson of Washington, Vermont, where he was born in 1828, he became important to Middleton after he bought land and established his headquarters there. On March 26, 1851, he acquired by purchase from Jonathan Berry about an acre and a half on the north side of Maple Street a short distance east of the corner of East Street (442-210). This irregular-shaped piece was bounded on the west by the heirs of William Hutchinson, ran north by them ten rods, then southeast and southwest to the north side of the road and so to Hutchinson again. Jefferson was to build a fence between his land and that of Jonathan Berry.

The first actual record of Jefferson's soapmaking in Middleton appears in *Statistics of the Industry of Massachusetts, 1855,* which mentions an establishment for the manufacture of soap and tallow candles. In that year it produced 1200 barrels of soft soap and ten tons of hard soap, all valued at $5200. Only two men were employed. Jefferson borrowed money to pay for his works, and on October 29, 1859, entered into an agreement with E. P. Potter and Nelson E. Jefferson, both of Middleton, to pay it back over a period of twelve years (549-45). He seems to have prospered and was apparently under no necessity of being bound by such a protracted arrangement. On May 12, 1860 (611-159), he paid $3000 and became sole owner of the works. In the following February, however, he conveyed it to Abel B. Walker of Andover, "together with the Soap Manufactory and all the other buildings thereon." Walker was not a soapmaker, but he retained title to the place until September 1, 1863, when he sold it to a manufacturer, Alpheus P. Noyes of Middleton, for $1750 (675-176).

Meantime, Walker had acquired from Jonathan Berry "the use and improvement of a well situated on my premises — and adjoining land of said Walker, together with the right of entering upon my land for the purpose of clearing out said well or of repairing or relaying the aqueduct leading from it to the premises of said Walker." This water right is of interest as being the main supply for the business. James O. Perry, reminiscing in 1930, says that a pipe from a spring on the hillside led to the factory and to a trough under the great willow tree that shaded it on the south. Being conveniently near the highway, this trough was generally used by passersby for watering their cattle.

Under the management of A. P. Noyes the soap works reached its peak of activity. By 1865 five hands were employed and the total value of stock had risen to $13,950. The output included 1875 barrels of soft soap worth $7200; 1400 pounds of hard soap, valued at $2000; and "all other kinds" to the value of $10,000.

The soap factory itself was a two-and-one-half story frame building with a carefully graded driveway leading up to it. The "goods and chattels" for the business are given in detail in a mortgage for $1300 from A. P. Noyes to Abel B. Walker at the time of his purchase of the works. Recorded in Book II of the town clerk's record of mortgages, the list reads:

> One red Horse; one white Mare; one red Mare (white face); one Double Wagon; two Single Wagons; one pair of Double Harnesses; three Single Harnesses; one Chaise (two wheeled); two soap Sleighs; thirty barrels of Soft Soap; one half ton of Hard Soap; four hundred bushels of Ashes; one half ton of Soap Grease; all said property now being in my possession and use on the premises now occupied by me in said Middleton."
>
> September 1, 1863

While Mr. Noyes was running the works, John C. Metcalf was one of his assistants. He lived in a tenement near the soap factory and east of it on the hill. Older residents until quite recently were able to remember Mr. Metcalf going about town collecting grease.

By 1871 Metcalf was running a soap factory of his own. On December 28, 1870, he gave a small mortgage to Harriet C. Noyes, widow of A. P. Noyes, on "all stock and tools now in the soap manufactory of said John C. Metcalf on Main Street in Middleton." Also "1 Blind Mare, 1 Sorrel

Horse, 1 black Horse, 1 Two Horse Barge Wagon, 1 Two Horse Concord Soap Wagon, 1 Light Single Soap Wagon, 1 Heavy Single Soap Wagon. 1 Pair Double Harnesses, 1 Single Harness. All the same being now in use at said factory." (Book II, Town clerk's record of mortgages.)

The old Noyes factory was a landmark until 1895, when it was bought by Lewis Southwick and remodeled as an attractive dwelling house. The Southwicks used it for the summer. On October 3, 1899, they had just packed their belongings and left for the season when a fire broke out. Before aid could be summoned, the house was entirely destroyed.

Another building that had been part of the Noyes property was burned December 16, 1895. Known at the time as the old Noyes rendering works, this structure stood on the bank of the Ipswich River northeast of the Maple Street Bridge. It then belonged to William T. Martin, who used it as a storehouse on his large farm. Inside it were several tons of hay, a large quantity of corn fodder, fifty barrels of onions, about 3000 heads of cabbage, and a large number of farm tools. Uninsured, all this was a total loss to Mr. Martin. As the fire started on the roof, it was supposed to have been ignited by sparks from a train that passed nearby.

Thus by 1900 the business of making soap was ended in Middleton.

THE KNIFE FACTORY

Another small industry that gained some reputation outside of Middleton was a knife factory run by Samuel A. Cummings, who had had previous experience in the Hayward mill in Andover. His workshop was located on Mill Street next to the old sluiceway and dam originally built for the Middleton ironworks on the south bank of Pout Pond Brook. When he purchased this property from Samuel Symonds on April 20, 1864 (666-180), he also acquired a sawmill on the north side of the stream and a lot of land on the other side of the road.

This land and mill right was first developed by Francis Peabody, who sold it to his son Stephen just before his death in January 1817. By 1820 Stephen had put up his dwelling house nearby and he ran the sawmill for some twenty-five years. It went from him to his son Francis 3d. in 1844, and he in turn sold it to Symonds. Samuel Cummings utilized the sawmill to cut lumber for his shop and a new house and then tore it down.

As early as 1865 the statistics published by the secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts[5] gave the only authentic data about the business that I have found. It reads: "Cutlery, establishment for the m. of, 1; value of stock used, $2.50; doz. Shoe Knives m'd, 170; value, $425; cap., $300; hands emp. 2."

John Curtis of Peabody Street was one of the hands. From his son, the late Arthur E. Curtis, we learned that this little factory had the reputation of making the finest shoe knives that could be bought. The blades were adjustable in wooden hafts, so that they might be changed or sharpened. Mr. Curtis worked in the shop turning the knife handles.

It has been rumored that other kinds of cutlery were produced by Cummings, but there seems to be no basis for the idea, while (shoe) knives of superior quality are generally known to have established the business as as going concern. It was advertised in the *Essex County Business Directory* as late as 1884 and was probably in existence considerably later.

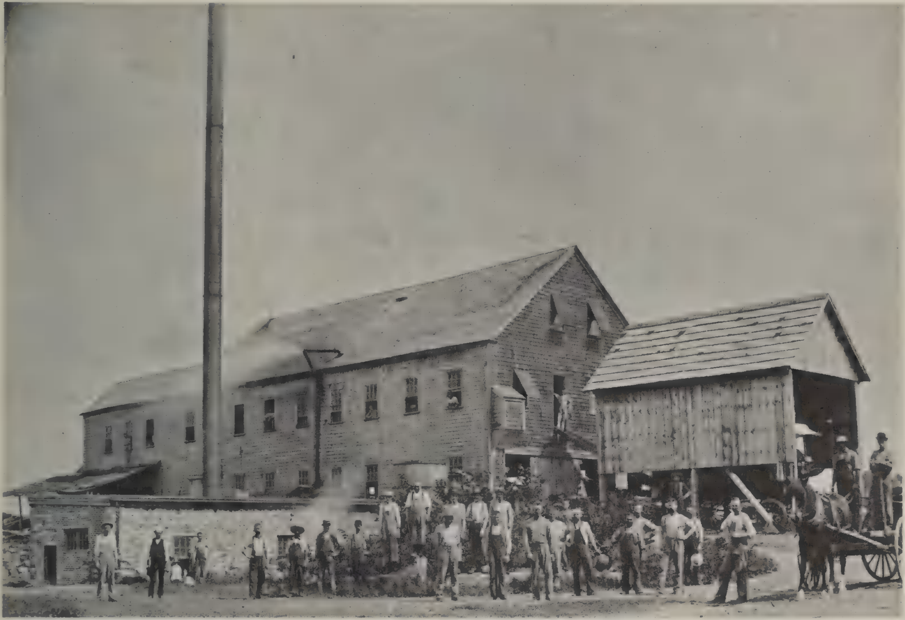
In May 1896 Cummings sold his property to Dr. Ernest W. Cushing of Boston, who improved it as a summer estate. According to *The Salem Evening News* of June first, the house was a very large two-story structure with a fine stable. When put up by Cummings about 1870, the buildings cost him $10,000. The further fate of the house is of interest. Dr. Cushing was determined to have all the most modern improvements. To that end he remodeled the dwelling, beginning with the addition of a piazza one hundred feet long and sixteen feet wide. Running water was piped in from the pond, where a new dam was built, and the unusual features of electric lights and a telephone were added. By 1899, we learn that "Dr. E. W. Cushing is beautifying his summer residence by painting it Pompeiian red, with green trimmings."

Like many lovers of the newest styles, Dr. Cushing seems to have had no appreciation of a very old house that stood on his land between Liberty and Mill Streets. In fact, the *News* of September 1, 1896, announced that he had taken it down. "The house is said to be over two hundred years old. Most of the timbers were oak, but many of them were much decayed." This was the home of Francis Elliot and his wife Jerusha, who left it to their daughter Jerusha, later the wife of Benjamin Nichols. It is often mentioned today as the old Gage house, from a later occupant.

THE BOX FACTORY

One of the most important of Middleton's few industries was the box factory, which was in operation from 1872 to 1892.[6] It stood on land now owned by Henry Sawyer along Ipswich River north of the Peabody Street bridge.

The enterprise was founded by one Josiah B. Thomas, a wholesale butcher from Middleboro, who had left his native town in 1860 to carry on his trade in Peabody. He was tied to the larger operations of the Swifts of Chicago whom he had known from boyhood in Middleboro. Since packing boxes were necessary in this business, it occurred to Thomas



J. B. Thomas box factory, Peabody Street, destroyed by fire December 24, 1892.

that a venture in this field would be remunerative.

Together with Charles Atwood, a manufacturer of trunks and boxes, Josiah Thomas bought the Samuel Symonds farm on Peabody Street on May 7, 1872, and put up a large factory building. They damned the river at this point in order to float their stock of planks. This timber was bought "on the stump." In winter horse and ox teams hauled the logs to the mill, where they were sawed into planks and put in the pond. At first the lumber was obtained locally, but, after nearby supplies were depleted, it had to be shipped from Maine and then hauled from the railroad. This proved in the end to be too expensive to be profitable.

During the 1880's Gilman A. Kimball of Danvers, a native Vermonter, was the superintendent. After his untimely death in 1889, resulting from a dog bite, he was succeeded by Henry P. McManus. As a young man McManus had come from Brunswick, Maine, in 1882 and found work on Thomas's farm in Peabody. He proved such an efficient workman that Thomas employed him to deliver to customers the boxes made at the mill, and then, after the death of Mr. Kimball, made him superintendent of the factory. McManus bought a one-eighth interest in the business, which he shared with LeBarron, the foreman, and Samuel McGlauflin, who had equal parts, while Thomas, the owner, held a five-eighths share. As time went on, McManus was given more and more responsibility and he eventually took over Thomas's previous activities.

At this time forty men were employed at the works. The picture shows that it was a building of considerable size. In the early eighteen-nineties more than 3,000,000 feet of boards were consumed annually and the gross sales reached $60,000. An innovation at this plant was the introduction of a steam engine for running the sawmill — an operation hitherto performed in Middleton by water power. Already the business was beginning to run at a loss. The cost of shipping wood from the railroad and then re-shipping by train to customers was becoming prohibitive. In consequence, the destruction of the plant by fire on the day before Christmas, 1892, was a greater calamity for the workmen who lost their jobs than it was to the proprietors. They were even then considering a move to some more profitable location.

McManus found a suitable site in Chelsea near the Boston & Maine Railroad tracks. In that location, with the assistance of Josiah B. Thomas, he went into the box business with Charles N. Atwood and his son Alton B. Atwood. Known as Atwood and McManus, the concern has flourished until the present time.

CHAPTER VIII NOTES

1. Now in the possession of Harry R. Woodward.

2. *Essex Institute Bulletin,* I, 100.
3. In Middleton Historical Society Collections.
4. Alfred Poore, M. D., "Genealogical and Historical Visitation of Andover, Mass., in the Year 1863," *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* LII, 287, (July 1916).
5. *Statistical Information relating to Certain Branches of Industry in Massachusetts, For the Year ending May 1, 1865,* Boston, 1866.
6. Much of the information in this story comes from articles by Frank C. Damon published in *The Salem Evening News,* July 25 and 26, 1928.

CHAPTER IX

Slaves in Middleton

In 1764 more than three quarters of all the slaves in Massachusetts were held in Essex, Suffolk, Bristol, and Middlesex counties. Suffolk had the greatest number, 1351, Essex, 1070, and Middlesex, 800.[1] This negro population remained almost constant until the outbreak of the Revolution. At that time it had fallen slightly in Essex County, where there were 50,903 whites and 1049 negroes within its bounds. This was a proportion of a little more than two per cent.

Middleton, in spite of being a town without industries or shipping, seems to have had a negro population slightly above the average in relation to the number of white people. In the period between 1760 and 1775 there were at least twenty-five negros of all ages in a population of about 500. Some of them were infants of unnamed parentage, but the birth of a slave child in the family of a white owner pre-supposes that the mother at least was then living in the household. These mothers, and fathers, too, are not recorded: if we knew more about them, we would find a considerably larger number of slaves owned in Middleton.

We might have a larger proportion if we could discover the truth of a story told by David Stiles in his history of the town[2] to the effect that Timothy Fuller (1707-1796) was the owner of forty slaves. Fuller's farm was not so extensive that he would have needed forty hands to run it. The explanation may be that he was buying and selling slaves, whom he quartered in one of his two large houses.

Aside from the negroes, however many, that may have been held by Fuller, the largest number actually recorded in one family belonged to John Flint. By his will, dated December 22, 1773, he left a servant woman named Pegg to his wife Huldah, servants Primus and Jack to his son Jeremiah, a girl, Kate, to his daughter Ruth, a girl Chloe, to his daughter Anne, and a servant boy, Woster, to his son John. Jacob Fuller, who made his will on January 4, 1768, bequeathed to his family a negro man named Snow, a negro woman called Vilet, and three girls, Posy, Rose, and Jean.

Members of the clergy in the eighteen century and earlier almost invariably had slaves for work on the farm and in the house. Rev. Joseph Green of the Salem Village church records going to Salem and buying a West Indian woman.[3] Rev. Andrew Peters, the first minister of the Middleton church, owned a number of slaves. When he died in 1758 he left a negro man and a negro woman. The woman was probably Ann, who outlived her mistress and died in Middleton as Ann Peters in 1820. A boy called Peter Peters was baptised by the minister in 1741 and remained in the family. As a lad he was the subject of a famous Middleton tale concerning Timothy Fuller. Fuller delighted in annoying and interfering with the boy when Peter drove the pastor's cows to pasture. One day Andrew Peters took the boy's place and remonstrated with the tormentor. Getting no satisfaction in this way, he settled the matter in a fashion better understood by Fuller. According to the story, he removed his clerical garb, placed it on a rock, and cried "Lay there, divinity, while I whip a rascal!" Whereupon he gave Fuller the thrashing he deserved. This story is so much a part of lore of the town, one writer has even identified the stump on Boston Street where the famous thrashing took place!

Mrs. Peters also owned a negro girl named Lydia. On December first, 1768, she stood up in church and confessed for the third time to the "sin of fornication." This supposedly soul-purifying ceremony was a custom introduced by Rev. Elias Smith, and many a church member revealed his earlier sins by complying with it. Lydia, the child of nature, probably enjoyed a feeling of importance in such a ritual rather than any sense of sin.

The Rev. Elias Smith had at least one slave and probably others. His great-grandson, writing in 1929, had this to say about one of them:[4]

> An important member of my grandfather's family and the principal domestic was Nance, a negro girl whom he purchased in Salem of the heirs of Capt. Palfray whose property was sold at auction after his death. Capt. Palfray lived on or near the corner of Essex and Newbury Streets. He traded on the coast of Africa, and was accustomed to bring home a few young negro slaves as an adventure. He had several on hand at the time of his death which were disposed of with his other effects. Nance was about fourteen years old when taken to Middleton, and under the careful training of my grandmother proved a trustworthy and capable

domestic. She lived in the family till the age of 28 when she was married to a slave beloning to one of the Shillabers of So. Danvers. Mr. Smith performed the marriage ceremony at the parsonage, and at the conclusion requested the husband whose name was Cesar to "salute his bride." Cesar gave my Grandfather a roguish look and said very politely "After you Massa."

It was not long before the husband became so troublesome that Mr. Smith was compelled to dispose of Nance, who was purchased by Deacon Peabody.

One of the greatest causes of suffering among the negroes was that their family ties were usually unrecognized. Husbands and wives were separated and their children sometimes given away or sold. It is noteworthy in this instance that the marriage of Nance and Cesar, although solemnized by the pastor, was not even entered in the marriage records. As a rule the negroes had no last names and their relations as man and wife were not dignified by any change in that respect. When Kate, the servant of Benjamin Fuller, was married in 1757 by Rev. Peter Clarke, pastor of the Salem Village church, to Trio, Jonathan Wilkins's man, she was still called Kate. She was probably the mother of Tamer, who was left to Fuller's widow at his death in 1767. Tamer died in Middleton in 1813; at that time she called herself Tamer Benjamin. Benjamin Fuller's son, Col. Archelaus, had a negro man servant when he died in 1777.

When Solomon Richardson passed away in 1761, he left a negro man, Frank, to his wife, who also had a maid, Dinah. Some years later a negro infant belonging to the widow Richardson, presumably the child of this couple, was "overlaid or at least found dead in the morning."

A "servant child" named Jack was born in the home of Francis Peabody and christened March 28, 1775. He was no doubt the offspring of Nance and perhaps of Cesar. Nance confessed to the sin of fornication on April 5, 1772, and again on August 16. She was then living with the Peabody family.

The Eliots also had negro servants. The inventory of John Eliot's possessions taken July 10, 1758, mentions a negro boy about seven years of age. He was inherited by Robert Eliot, who, when he died in 1762, owned a negro woman and boy — presumably the same child, Primus, then eleven years old.

The births of other negro children in the homes of Middleton residents allow the presumption that they or their parents were in bondage during this period 1760 to 1775. Hezekiah Wilkins, John Wilkins, Jr., Thomas Eliot, and Sarah Peabody were owners of negro babies.

Much has been said about the comparatively kind treatment given negro servants in the small northern towns, where they were often considered members of the family.[5] They sometimes ate at the same table, in fact, and would have been seen in the evening near the fire with other members of the household. These circumstances varied no doubt according to the disposition of the owners. The one thing that made the hardships of their lot more bearable in the north than in the south was that they worked in the fields along with their masters and not as unrecognized bondsmen on a great plantation. The southern master might have been seen sitting on the porch sipping cool drinks and fanning himself, while his servants sweated in the fields, but in New England the Yankee farmer worked, too, from dawn to dark, slave or no slave.

However well they were treated, the negroes not infrequently ran away. Their owners advertised for them in the newspapers of the day with descriptions and offers of rewards for their return. The following notice was placed in the *Boston Gazette* of November 6, 1758, by Timothy Perkins of Middleton:

> Run away from his master mr. *Timothy Perkins of Middleborough* [sic] the county of Essex, a negro servant named Pompey, of a middle stature; said Fellow has lost one finger from one of his hands; Whosoever shall take up said Negro and convey him to his master shall have Four Dollars reward, and all necessary charges paid.
>
> By Timothy Perkins

Probably the harshest feature of northern slave life, which took their very lives, was the cold in winter. Coming from tropical climates, they were not adapted to the terrific cold. Even in the most comfortable houses of the time, there was little heat; it is known that liquids sometimes froze in rooms where fires were burning. George Adams of Byfield recorded in his diary that it was only twelve above "in the house this morning."[6] Adapting themselves to these conditions, the householders snuggled into feather beds warmed by pans of coals and managed to keep comfortable. But the negro slave was often relegated to a bunk in an unheated attic supplied with "slave bedding." The open attic not only was without heat, but it usually had various cracks and chinks where the wind could blow in fine snow during the night. Such a slave bed under the eaves, once occupied by an Indian, who may have had more resistance, is still pointed out in "Highfields", the old George Adams house in Byfield. In any event, the slaves were just as uncomfortable as any modern American would be under the circumstances.

It is said that the masters tried to provide proper clothing for their servants in winter. Descriptions in advertisements of the apparel worn by runaway slaves show that they were supplied with greatcoats, often with jackets underneath, with heavy pants and boots and wool socks. These garments were costly and took time to make, and some owners disposed of their slaves rather than undergo the expense of dressing them properly. It was found more profitable to acquire white bond servants from Ireland or Scotland, who were inured to the cold.

When the Revolutionary War was over the Negro population of Massachusetts was supposed to be free: at least, in 1790 Massachusetts was the only state in the union that listed its slave population as "none." This did not mean that the negro's lot was bettered: it was, in fact, worse. A few chose to remain with the families where they had lived; others managed to eke out an existence by doing a few mean jobs. Almost none of them were able to advance from their lowly position. What were such poor, ignorant, handicapped people to do? In many places, as in Middleton, among others, they became public charges and a burden to the town for years. In the town meeting records we find that Middleton voted as late as May 10, 1824, "to Choose an agent to see if they can get rid of any of the Negroes that they have to support." This is not quite so unfeeling as it sounds. Years before, the town had allotted a piece of land to one Snow Francis. In 1809 they were obliged to sell part of this property to pay off his bills. It is probable that Snow's real name was Charles Francis. Married to one Betty Kimball in 1795, he had eight or ten children in the years before 1812. A Frank Francis, who may have been his brother, also had a large family, and John Francis, his son, married Nancy, daughter of Charles, and they added to the population. David Stiles, writing in 1888, says that Snow lived in a hut on the spot then occupied by the house of Isaac Gates (corner of North Main and Forest Streets) and that he was the last of the old stock of colored people.

It is perhaps not surprising that a small and poor town found it difficult to care for these people. As late as the 1830's it was Middleton's custom to "strike off" the poor to the highest bidder. The sums bid were merely token payments, the bidders agreeing to give homes to the poor in exchange for whatever labor they might be able to perform, while the town provided clothing and some other necessities. In 1827, Edmund Francis, son of Charles, was taken by Captain Samuel Wilkins for twenty cents. Three years later he went to Abigail Fuller Kimball, who took him free of expense to the town, for one year. In 1831 he was again in the Wilkins house.

Thus these poor souls, fifty years after their freedom had been declared, were still virtually slaves. Nor did they better themselves by going to other towns. In 1790 a number of negroes from Middleton were "warned out" of Salem. Among them was Peggy Flint, the servant girl left to the widow of John Flint in 1780. The fate of this girl, who had lived, perhaps not unhappily, with kindly people, but who now was thrust on the streets, homeless, is a sad example of what happened to the ex-slaves.

CHAPTER IX NOTES

1. Lorenzo Johnson Greene, Ph. D., *The Negro in Colonial New England,* 1620-1776, Columbia University Press, New York, 1942.
2. David Stiles, "Middleton," *History of Essex County, Massachusetts,* D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., Philadelphia, 1888.
3. Rev. Joseph Green, "Diary," *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* VIII, 1868.
4. George Peabody, *Family Gatherings relating to the Smith and Blanchard Families with Memoir of the Rev. Elias Smith,* Danvers, 1929.
5. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Oldtown Folks*, 1869.
6. George Adams, *"Diary,"* in Essex Institute.

PART II

The Old Houses of Middleton

CHAPTER X

The Old Houses of Middleton

THE OLDEST FULLER HOUSE

Five houses still standing in Middleton were built by descendants of Thomas Fuller, the blacksmith, who came to the settlement from Woburn in 1663. His own dwelling stood east of the junction of King and Mount Vernon Streets, where Mrs. Harry H. Bradstreet recently lived, and he built a shop and a sawmill on the stream that runs from Middleton Pond to the Ipswich River. There is a possibility that a section of his house, part of a later addition, may still be in existence. At least, tradition says that a part of the Fuller house was moved in the 1830's to the Essex Turnpike opposite the Fuller burying ground. This was owned at one time by George A. Currier and was recently the property of Donald A. Aylward. The wing was on the old Fuller house when Rev. Elias Smith lived there in the eighteenth century. Rev. J. Augustine Hood, writing in 1854,[1] says: "Mr. Smith lived in what is now the Kenny house. The room which he occupied as a study was pointed out to me two or three years since."

Thomas Fuller, gave, bequeathed, or sold land to his sons Thomas, John, Jacob, Joseph, and Benjamin. With the 300 acres of his original purchase and a still larger tract acquired later, together with the lands acquired by the sons, the Fullers owned a large part of the village.

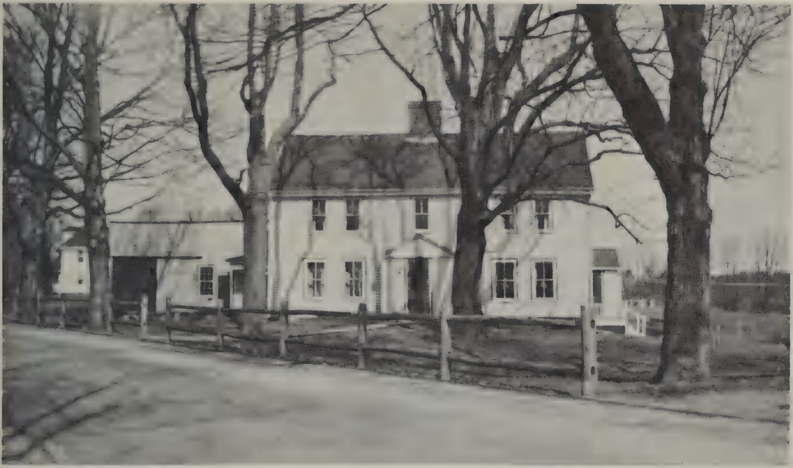
A little family history is necessary for an understanding of the Fuller houses and their locations. I will first trace the record of Thomas's son Thomas and his descendants. On April 22, 1690, the elder Thomas leased to his son for ten pounds his farm and the easterly end of his dwelling house, the leanto on the back side, the barn and the orchard, with all the land on the east side of the brook down to the sawmill, he to have the rest of the house after the death of his parents. In the words of the agreement: "I reserve to myself the liberty of making use of two acres of upland within or without the field, only I will not have it near the barne,and also liberty yearly to cut two load of grass in the meadows: and Tho. is alsoe to keep me two cows and a horse with haye every winter, and find me firewood from of that land which is now in my possession lying between the Seder swamp and Wilkins' pond—"

After the death of the first Thomas in 1698, Thomas the second made a similar arrangement with his son John, giving him the westerly end of the dwelling. John, however, built a house of his own about 1710, and, on November 17 of that year, his brother William was given the same half of the homestead and his son later succeeded to its ownership. In 1755 it went out of the family and became the property of Jonathan Wilkins and later the home of Rev. Elias Smith.

The earliest Fuller house now standing is the one occupied by Raymond H. Currier. It faces south down Old South Main Street, and the land abuts the old Fuller burying ground. Thomas Fuller, Jr., was living here in 1684. It was then the most northerly point on a finished road that was to run from Salem to Andover. In the following year, according to the Salem selectmen's records, he was appointed "an overseer of the highway from *his house* to Andover bounds."

The younger Thomas had married Ruth Richardson in 1669. It is unlikely that the Currier house was built thus early, but the internal evidence shows that it could have been the home where Thomas was living in 1684. Two able historians [2] have examined it independently and have agreed that it was probably built in the 1680's It is a center-chimney house, originally having two rooms on the ground floor and two upstairs. The chimney is based on a stone foundation supporting the four fireplaces of the original building. Although closed at present, these fireplaces are still in existence. A saltbox leanto was later added, and this in turn was raised by Mr. Currier's father Charles Currier to give additional room on the second floor. Mr. Cummings believes that the roof was entirely renewed at this time, so that it does not show the steep pitch in front that it would originally have had.

The earliest feature still remaining is the closed-in front stairway with its pine sheathing and winding steps. The heavy hewn framework of the building is still exposed in the western side of the house. Wide chamfering with lamb's tongue stops appears on the summer beams and the girts. This rather crude decoration was further embellished by cross cuts on the tongue ends. The beams themselves are narrow and deep in characteristic seventeenth-century style. The corner posts and upright timbers are of the so-called gunstock variety, with the unusual feature of being tapered down in a gentle curve from top to mid-point of their length instead of being kneed.

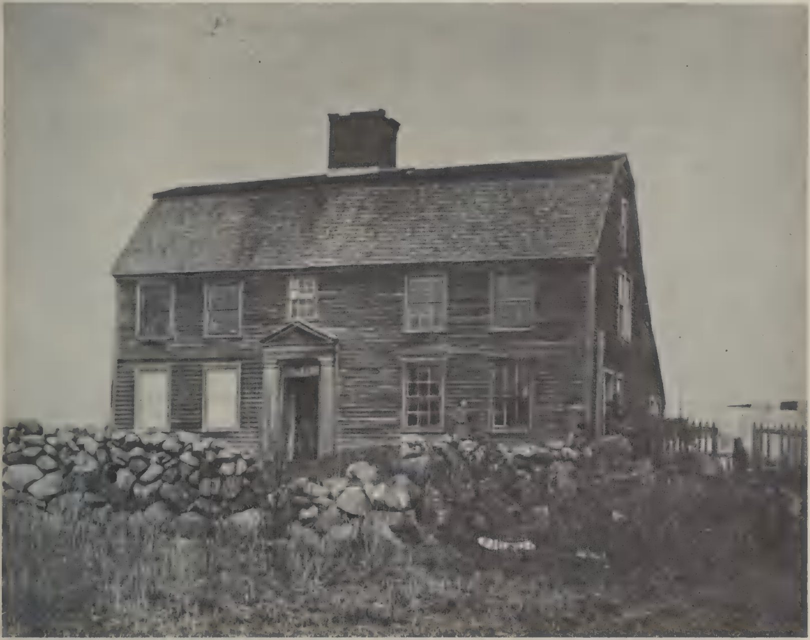


House on Old South Main Street, occupied in 1685 by
Lieut. Thomas Fuller. Built about 1680.

As previously related, Thomas Fuller, Jr., leased half of his father's house in 1690 and presumably moved there to live with him. At least, he had done so by February 9, 1693, when he conveyed to his son Thomas third "for love" his "house, barn, and orchard Where I formerly lived with the Land belonging thereunto" (47-250). Young Thomas married Elizabeth Andrews on May third of that same year. The couple had six children who lived — Joseph, Timothy, and four daughters. Thomas third [Lieut.] continued to live on this estate until his death in 1754.

In 1738/9 Lieut. Thomas made a will bequeathing all his lands in Midleton and Reading, with all his buildings and "moveable estate," to his son Timothy, who at this time was thirty-one years old. The father was now getting along in years, and his son was apparently living in the house with him and running the farm. Although as yet unmarried, Timothy was carrying on all kinds of business enterprises. On October 15, 1740 (80-134), he bought his father's entire 140-acre estate, paying 1500 pounds for it. This included thirty acres on the west side of Andover road and a ten-acre piece on the east side — the same that had been given Lieut. Thomas by his father in 1693/4. As described in the deed to Timothy, it was bounded on the west by the road; on the north by Isaac Wilkins and William Fuller; on the east by the land of Jonathan Fuller running to Andover road. In this conveyance Lieut. Thomas reserved to himself the house and barn and one acre of land. Three months later Timothy paid 720 pounds for Jonathan Fuller's property on the east side of Mount Vernon Street (82-62). This comprised sixty acres of land with a dwelling. Jonathan Fuller, a tanner, was moving to Sutton, Massachusetts. Thus Timothy acquired another house, which was still in his possession when he died in 1795. As his widow always lived in it, they probably made it their home after their marriage in 1749.

When Lieut. Thomas died in 1754, his only real estate was one half of a dwelling house and one half an acre of land. By his will this old house now became Timothy Fuller's property. He had married Sarah Smith, a girl of eighteen, and they may have lived there for a time, or it may have been used to house the numerous slaves Fuller is supposed to have owned. In the settlement of his estate both houses went to his widow and six children, or their heirs. The oldest daughter, Sarah, was twice married and had five children, but had died November 16, 1795, shortly before the death of her father. To her heirs were left the "Mansion house" and two acres of land. The boundaries show clearly that this was the Currier house. Beginning at the southeasterly corner by the County road (Old South Main Street and Mount Vernon Street), they ran northwesterly by the road to a wall at the land of Silas Meriam; thence northeast to a stake and stones by land of Moses Foster (another heir); southeast by



House built by Jonathan Fuller in the 1690's. It stood on Mount Vernon Street, opposite the Fuller burying ground. Sold to Timothy Fuller in 1740. Burned July 21, 1905.

Foster and Timothy Fuller, Jr.; and thence southwest by Timothy Fuller to the first bound. In the settlement of Sarah Wilkins's estate the mansion house was allotted to her son Samuel, who was then but sixteen years of age.

In the succeeding years the Timothy Fuller house went through various hands. Samuel Wilkins, on June 8, 1808 (185-58), sold the land and dwelling to Theodore Ingalls, a prominent and prosperous blacksmith of Middleton. The property conveyed contained little more than six acres, for which Ingalls paid $828.75. He also bought Timothy, Jr.'s, acre or more bordering on the burying ground, as it still does.

Theodore Ingalls died in 1818, leaving three farms, one of which was the "Fuller farm", valued at $1300. The place had been occupied jointly by the Ingalls sons, Enoch and Moody. But Enoch had died suddenly a few days before his father, with the result that his widow Sally, left with a small baby, found that her widow's thirds and her half of the dwelling house amounted to but $150 to pay debts of $750. She lived in the western side of the house and her land bounded on the County road. Moody Ingalls, after a period of raising money by mortgaging his half of the estate, on May 20, 1820 (222-261), sold what was described as "Fielding with one half a house" to Jesse Flint, millwright, for $775.

Flint conveyed the same property two years later, on February 15, 1822 (228-137), with a barn and about eight acres to Ezra Nichols of Middleton, physician. On the north the land ran to the schoolhouse lot formerly sold to the town by Dr. Silas Meriam; on the southeast it was bordered by the Fuller cemetery. The line that divided the two parts of the house was measured exactly through the center of the chimney and the center of the front door.

Sally Ingalls sold her half of the house to Dr. Nichols on February 15, 1828 (248-90), for $150. She had just published her intention of marriage to William Goodhue of Danvers. This conclusion of her story is gratifying when one remembers her poverty after the death of her young husband and how the reversion of her dower was sold at auction to pay her debts. Solomon Wilkins had bid it in for only $11.50 and then quit-claimed the half house and half acre to the little widow for $15. Surely the good people of Middleton must have been in collusion to save a home for Sally.

Ezra Nichols lived in the town and served it from 1822 until April first, 1847, when, after moving to Newton, he conveyed the old house with barn and outbuildings to Daniel Weed, Jr., of Salem, for $2600. The sale (380-43) included fifty-four and one-half acres on the other side of the turnpike.

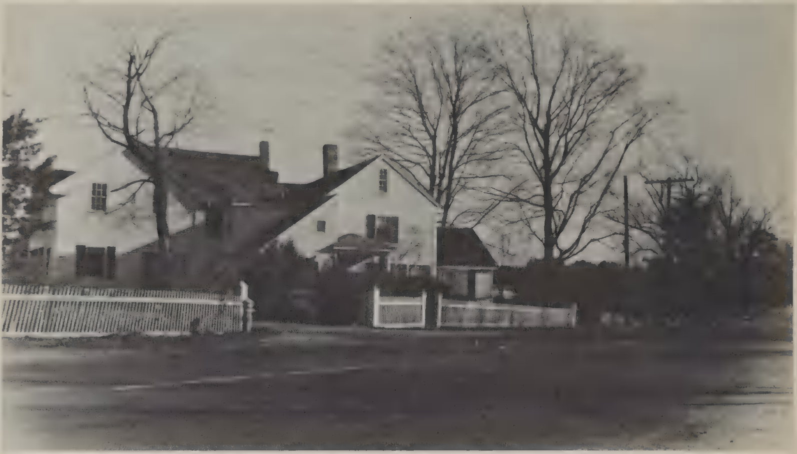
Daniel Weed owned the house for seven years. It then came into the hands of George A. Currier of Middleton, who purchased it with nearly eight acres for $1300 on April 29, 1854 (494-262). The place has remained in the Currier family for the past century and more and is now owned by his grandson. George Currier made some of the drastic changes in the house. He was a shoemaker and he built a fine two-room shoe shop still standing on the premises. Today, as in the early nineteenth century, the house is divided and occupied by two families.

THE JACOB FULLER HOUSE

The first Thomas Fuller's son Jacob, who was a blacksmith like his father, received by gift and inheritance a large share of the family property. Born May 14, 1655, he married Mary Bacon, June 19, 1683. In the following year, on April 3, Thomas gave his son with other lands a part of the original Denison farm (9-221). The bounds ran from the west end of a pine swamp to the easterly end and continued on to a point "by the meadow Comonly Called Prices meadow" (on the Ipswich River); thence northerly to the brook and west on the south side of the brook to the first bounds. This doubtless included land along Boston Street on the west and the low meadow towards Ipswich River on the east. Nothing is known about Jacob's first homestead, except that in 1798, according to the state tax list, there was on the land an "Old Dwelling house" that measured twenty-eight feet by eighteen, was one story high, and covered an area of 504 square feet. It was then valued at only thirty dollars. This may have been Jacob's original house and the one he was renting to John Wooden in 1714. In that year Fuller claimed a Salem common right for the house "where Wooden lived."

Jacob Fuller probably built the house on South Main Street formerly owned by Hazen K. Richardson and now occupied by his daughters, the Misses Lillian and Helen. On September 10, 1715, he made important transfers to his sons Edward and Jacob. To Edward Fuller, blacksmith, he gave a tract of land half a mile square in the northern part of town with a small dwelling house and the frame of a large new house upon it (28-73); and to Jacob, Jr., he deeded all "that my homestead where I now dwell Consisting of a dwelling outhousing & about 300 acres of Land — upland & meadow ground," situated partly in Salem and partly in Reading (29-198). This included all his buildings and land except the piece given to Edward, and Jacob was to have "the one half thereof for quantity and quality forthwith & the other half after the Decease of me & my wife."

The second Jacob Fuller married Abigail Holten before April 1, 1729, when their first child, Elisha, was born. We may assume that he was



Original part of this dwelling was built by Jacob Fuller before 1714.
Now home of the Misses Lillian and Helen Richardson.

then living in his father's house, which, as shown by the deed of gift, must have been built before 1715. This house, under the ownership of the Richardsons, has been so changed it might not immediately be recognized as a very ancient building. Originally, no doubt, having but two rooms on the ground floor and two above, it was later enlarged by a leanto on the north side. The saltbox roofline of this period is still in evidence. Much later additions are a room and a sun porch on the south or front side and an extension as large as the original house in the rear. The proof of its age appears indoors in various features, such as a porch-type extension in the front hall, a winding stair, early heavy exposed timbers in the west chamber, and several large early fireplaces now closed.

On February 9, 1757, Jacob Fuller sold to his eldest son, Elisha, for one-third of their value two tracts of land that were parts of the original homestead (103-222). The first of these comprised seventy-three acres. Elisha returned the same to his father February 26, 1764, receiving £440, its full value (118-108). This was in the nature of a settlement, as Elisha was given only twelve shillings from the estate when his father died three years later. Jacob Fuller then owned 280 acres with buildings and several other lots. The son Ezra had died in 1763, and Holten's death occurred in 1767, one month after the demise of his father. Timothy was a minister, living in Princeton, Massachusetts; by his father's will he was allotted land out of town. Holten and David were to have all lands and buildings east of the Andover road (the Richardson house) and land west of the road, while Jacob inherited all the land that his father had bought from Elisha, which was on the westerly side. This acreage now included buildings presumably a house and barn — which must have been put up by Jacob between 1764 and 1767.

After the death of Holten, David Fuller bought the rights in the homestead from the other heirs and took title. The girls had a privilege in the house as long as they remained unmarried. The east chamber and one half of the "suller" under it was reserved for their use, and they were allowed three-quarters of an acre for a garden back of the house between the highway and the well. These daughters eventually married and left home.

Jacob remained unmarried until 1795, when on May 26, he took as his wife Jerusha Upton of Boxford. He was then forty-eight years old. The state census of 1798 shows Jacob Fuller as owner and occupant of 186 acres of land on the west side of Andover Road and Dr. David with 166 acres on the east side. David's house was then describd as being two stories high and covering 1080 square feet of ground. It was lighted by thirteen small windows containing only sixty-six square feet of glass. Jacob died November 20, 1799. By arrangement with his sisters, David then became sole possessor of the property.

David was still unmarried at the age of fifty. He soon took a step which is so closely woven into the history of the house that it must here be mentioned. David's sister Elizabeth and her husband Ebenezer Kimball had settled in Amherst, New Hampshire. In May 1801 her daughter Abigail Fuller Kimball became by a court decision the heir and executor of her uncle Elisha Fuller, thereby becoming the owner of a very large estate in Middleton. In the following month she gave birth to a daughter whose name was entered in the Middleton town records as Abigail H. Fuller, d. Dr. David and Abigail. However, the historian of Amherst, Daniel F. Secomb, states that she was the wife of a Dr. Robert Fuller. The Middleton entry is probably the result of an unhappy surmise. In any event the doctor gave her and her child a home under his roof, and they lived there with him until his death in 1821. Abigail Fuller Kimball always used her maiden name and her daughter was called Abigail Holten Fuller. Dr. Fuller took care of their money affairs as long as he lived, paying the taxes on their property as well as on his own. By his will he left his farm to Abigail's daughter, with the provision that if she should die first, it would go to her mother.

The two women were thus left in charge of the old Fuller homestead. The doctor also left another house in Salem; after a while they went to live there. On April 15, 1833, they sold the one-hundred-acre farm with the house, barn, and outbuildings for $6000 to Dr. Ezra Nichols (270-81). The transfer reserved to their own use the old Fuller burying ground between Old South Main and Mount Vernon Streets. In addition they sold fifty acres on the other side of the highway with the buildings and several other small tracts of land and meadow. One week later Dr. Nichols conveyed one third of the estate to Amos Batchelder for $2000 and one third to Ephraim Fuller for the same sum. On the nineteenth of the following September these gentlemen sold the part of the farm east of the road, with the old Jacob Fuller house and its outbuildings to Elbridge Stiles of Middleton for $3000.

Stiles was not destined to keep the property very long. He placed two mortgages on the place, one that included a house and small piece of land on Maple Street, but he was unable to meet his payments. Nichols, Batchelder, and Fuller were still in possession, and they conveyed the farm on January 29, 1844, to Daniel Emerson and Daniel Fuller of Middleton (348-158). By them it was sold to William O. Andrews, a so-called "trader" of Salem, on May 10 (348-158). Andrews put it in trust for his wife Hannah, by whom it was sold August 10, 1855 (446-27), to Benjamin P. Richardson, father of the late Hazen K. Richardson. The estate was then slightly smaller than it had been in 1844, as sales to

Matilda Brookhouse and Nathan Brown had diminished it to less than the former eighty acres. Today it still extends south almost to the Ipswich River.

THE JOSEPH FULLER HOUSE

The beautiful saltbox house first owned by Joseph Fuller, grandson of Thomas the blacksmith, stands on the east side of Essex Street about two miles north of Pout Pond Brook. When it was built before 1722, the farm bounded on the Andover line. At the time of the incorporation of Middleton in 1728, this town boundary was moved about a mile to the north.

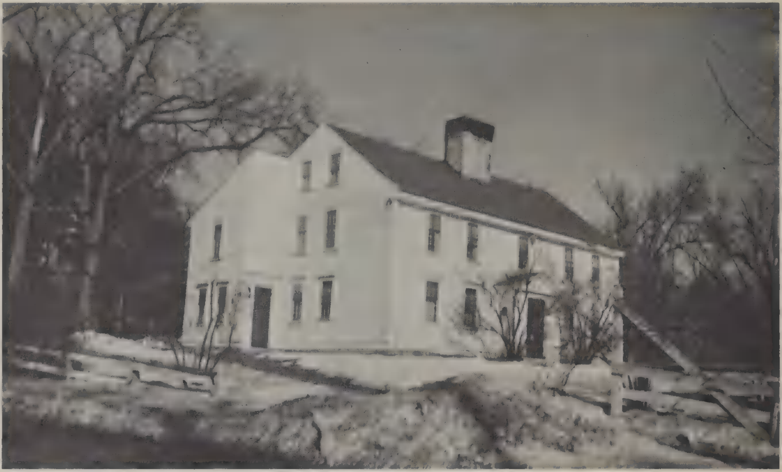
Joseph was the son of Thomas Fuller, 2d., who superintended the building of this Andover road in 1685. Born August 12, 1679, Joseph was then only a small boy. When he was still only twenty years of age, his father sold him twenty-four acres of land, he paying seven pounds for it. Although he later acquired many other fields and meadows, this was probably the original farm and the lot where the house now stands.

The Fuller house is first mentioned in a deed dated October 30, 1722 (41-147), when William Blunt of Andover sold Joseph seven acres north of the Andover line. One bounary lay along the line "near said Fuller's house." It is again referred to on June 20, 1723, when John Martin of Andover sold Fuller a couple of acres on the west side of the highway "upon the North end of the Broad of Beachy Meadow so called and the said meadow Lieth near to the said Joseph Fuller's Dwelling house" (39-251).

Although these are the earliest recorded dates we can ascribe to the house, it was presumably built somewhat earlier. On February 17, 1711, Joseph had married Rachel Buxton and, after her death, he took a second wife, Susannah Dorman, on November 3, 1713. As he had owned the land since 1699, and all his six children were born before the deed from Blunt that mentioned his dwelling, he was probably living in it at least as early as 1714. The structure of the house confirms this theory.

It is obvious that many changes have taken place in the Fuller mansion in the past century. Nevertheless, it still has many of its original features. As viewed from the street the saltbox form of the house is not immediately apparent, but, when seen from the rear or east side, where the roof line corresponds to the Beverly jog that forms an entrance at the west end, it is quite evident. Thus the house was built with two rooms facing south and a long leanto, divided, no doubt, differently than at present, on the north.

The front rooms are charming with old fireplaces surrounded by



164 Joseph Fuller House, Essex Street. Early eighteenth century.

paneling. The bedrooms above are also light, bright, and attractive, with good fireplace walls. It must be remembered that originally the house was more simple than it is now. Such features as bolection moldings and paneled woodwork must have replaced earlier plain sheathing. Fundamentally it is the type of house that so often dates from the early eighteenth century, with its huge center chimney and saltbox roofline, and it may safely be considered the same building mentioned in the deed of 1722.

The south entryway has a projection beyond the front of the house, a a feature found also on the Edward Putnam, Jr., homestead built in 1705 and on the Jacob Fuller house of 1714. This kind of extension so frequently seen on early dwellings is generally considered a later addition for light and space.

The leanto or kitchen fireplace seems to have been reconstructed, but it is still a generous and useful adjunct to household comfort.

A curious and unusual arrangement of attic stairs in this house is amusing. There are in fact two complete stairways to the upper story, which are quite confusing to a stranger's sense of direction. Doubtless they were built for separate use when the dwelling was divided for two occupants and their families. This would have been convenient when Amos and Ephraim shared the house, or perhaps when Simeon and his mother lived in it.

The cellar has the usual fieldstone construction of chimney base found in houses built before 1740. A crude stairway leads down to it.

The builder and first owner of the house died March 27, 1748. His children were Joseph, son of his first wife, born February 12, 1712; Rachel, daughter of Susanna, 1714; Ruth, 1716; Amos, 1717; Thomas, 1720; and Ephraim, March 7, 1722. By his will Joseph left the homestead to his sons Amos and Ephraim, while to Joseph and Thomas he gave "that Lott of Land at Windham in Connecticut Which I bought of Benjamin Bushal and his wife." Ephraim was made executor of the estate, which included housing and lands and all the outdoor movables.

Joseph's eldest son became a housewright. On this account it has been surmised that he had something to do with the building of the house. This could hardly be true, as he was only a child when it was erected. He may, however, have been concerned with some details of paneling and finish that appear to be later embellishments of the or iginal simple farmhouse. In this connection it is interesting to note that the same molding plane was used to cut the window caps on this house and on the dwelling of Captain Andrew Fuller, Joseph's cousin. It appears more than likely that Joseph helped to build Andrew's house, for the name *Joseph* is chalked on its attic door.

The two brothers Amos and Ephraim lived on the farm, where their children were born before 1760. Ephraim was the more aggressive of the two. After his father's death he immediately made purchases of land to increase the property, some in his own name and some in joint ownership with his brother. On April 8, 1760, Amos conveyed to Ephraim twenty-nine acres "about thirty or forty rods below said Ephraim's House on the North sied of Andover Road," together with another piece of fifteen acres of the homestead on the south side of the highway. Besides other purchases Ephraim also added to his holdings forty-eight acres of the adjacent Samuel Stearns property. December 10, 1767 (115-166), the following transfer took place. It reads: "for divers good Causes & Considerations have released and surrendered and have given up all my Right Claim and Title unto my Brother Ephraim Fuller — in that Part of the Estate of our Hon'd Father Joseph Fuller late of Middleton dec'd." There were three parcels: "the first Part lieth on both Side of the Country Road called Andover Road and where said Ephraim's Dwelling House and Barn now stands." Thus Ephraim became sole owner of the Fuller farm.

Ephraim Fuller had married Mary, daughter of Ezra Putnam, on October 17, 1749, and they had five children born during the 1750's. One of the sons, Nehemiah, served in the Revolutionary War and was one of eight from Middleton who answered to the alarm of April 19, 1775. His father, familiarly known by his militia title as Capt. Ephraim, carried on the farm until his death in 1792. On July 8, 1790, two days before the marriage of his youngest son, Simeon, he made a will giving him "all lands, buildings, in Middleton and Andover and all cattle, sheep, and swine and all outdoor movebels — also 1 bed & Bedding, one Clock Desk & one flax Come." He also expressed the wish that "one quarter of an Acre of Grounds where the buring place is Shall never be sold and those that have Buried their Frends there my still have liberty to bury therein." This family lot was across the way somewhat south of the homestead. After a town cemetery was provided in Middleton the remains of the Fullers and others were removed to Oakdale, where their resting places marked with the early gravestones may be seen along a path on the west side not far from the gate.

The state census for taxation of 1798 gives a complete description of the estate and house as it was during Simeon Fuller's ownership. The total value of the 205 acres of land and the buildings was $2426. The house covered 1209 square feet, was two stories in height, and had twenty-one windows with 125 square feet of glass. There were two barns, one sixty feet long and twenty-four feet wide, and a smaller one forty by thirty. There was also a "cyder" house.

As mentioned above, Simeon Fuller was married on June 10, 1790. His bride was Rebecca Berry, daughter of Nathaniel and Susanna. They had four sons and a daughter, all born before 1803. Only three years later, March 10, 1806. Simeon passed away at the age of forty-six. His widow lived on for forty years, and since one-third of the property was hers, she always made her home with her eldest son Dean, who took over the farm.

Dean married Lydia A. Berry of Andover, December 19, 1822, but the couple had no children. He lived until 1864 and was the last of the Fuller blood to occupy the house. By his will he left the entire property, both real and personal, to Lydia, making her his executor. His only heirs-at-law, or next of kin, were his brothers, Ephraim, who lived in a large house where the Flint Public Library now stands, Abijah, who owned a roomy house on Mount Vernon Street, and Jesse, who lived in New York.

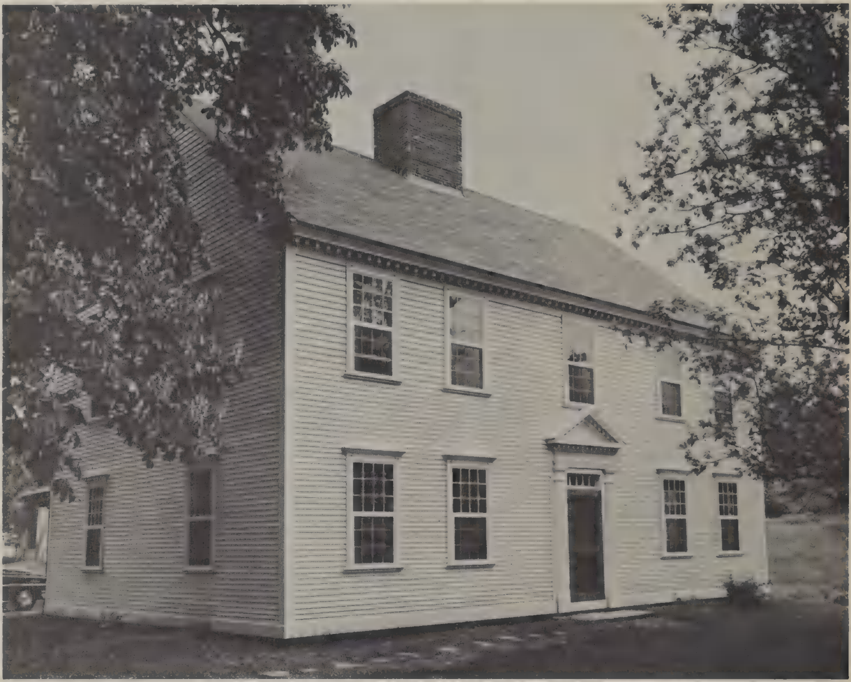
In 1856 there was on the Fuller farm south of the mansion a small house owned by one Charles Bixby. The foundation may still be seen. At a later time the building was used as a neighborhood school, and finally was moved to Washington Street, where it again became a dwelling.

During a period in the eighteen-sixties Cyril Theriault (Terrio) and his family were living on the place, probably as tenants of part of the main house. A few years later they moved into a house of their own down the road. The Beers atlases of 1872 and 1884 give the name J. Divine as the owner of the Fuller farm. Later it was occupied by many others until the Fuller name was no longer associated with it. Its present owner is Dr. Audrey Bill.

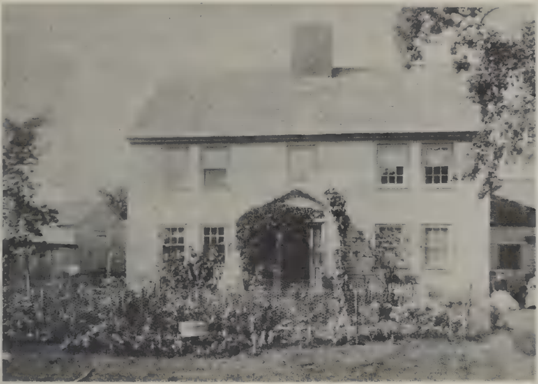
THE CAPTAIN ANDREW FULLER HOUSE

It will be recalled that Thomas Fuller in 1680 made an agreement by which his son Thomas was to share his house and homestead. When the father died in 1698, Thomas second entered into a similar arrangement with his son John, whereby John was to live in the westerly half of his dwelling. Apparently they did not enjoy the farm in perfect peace and harmony. In 1710 (25-231), William Fuller, John's brother, was given this same half of the family homestead, and he and his descendants succeeded to its ownership.

On May 7, 1715 (33-145), John Fuller conveyed his share back to his father. As the deed is worded: "To our honored father Thomas Fuller we do return it again."By this time John had built a home of his own north of his father's land, on or near the spot on King Street where the Capt. Andrew Fuller house now stands. In a deed from Thomas to Wil-



Capt. Andrew Fuller House on King Street. Built by him in 1750.
Home of the Richardson-Howe family 1834 to 1952.



House built by Andrew Fuller in 1748. Occupied by his son David from 1788 until his death in 1821. Later purchased by Joseph Porter Gould. Torn down in the 1880's.

liam dated June 10, 1710, he mentions as a boundary a tree standing by the highway "near John Fuller's house," This dwelling may have stood where the garage of the present house adjoins the main building. A structure, perhaps the same, occupied this site in the early 1800's. It was used as a store and had a hall upstairs for dancing, school-keeping, and other purposes. In 1813 the building was moved across the street to the corner of King and Maple Streets and made into a dwelling house. If this was not the original John Fuller house, we must conclude that his early home was torn down in the 1740's.

John Fuller lived until 1735. In 1730 he was called an innkeeper, but there is no other reference to him in that capacity. He had three sons — John, David, and Andrew. John succeeded to the farm, as David had moved to Sutton, Massachusetts, and Andrew was only eighteen years old. By his father's will Andrew inherited a grant of land in Amherst, New Hampshire, and 150 pounds in money to be given him when he came of age. Andrew stayed on the farm for at least four years, but thereafter was called a "mariner." There is no record of his transactions or activities during the next seven years. We only know that when Andrew Fuller came back to Middleton upon the death of his brother in 1746, he was a man of means. At the request of his mother and his brother's widow, he took title to the estate. In return he paid to his mother £955; to his sister-in-law £550; to his brother David and his four sisters £150 each; and to a niece £50. All signed quit-claim deeds, his mother reserving to her own use the "indoor moveables."

Andrew Fuller's remarkable rise in wordly position is indicated more positively by his ensuing transactions. On April 6, 1748 (93-12), he bought in company with Timothy Fuller a tract of fifty acres from John Cummings at a cost of £2500. In the following year he bought out Timothy's interest for £1068.15. There was then a house and barn on the property. This was probably the house on East Street still remembered by older residents as the old Porter Gould place — the same dwelling given by Andrew to his son David in 1788. In later purchases he acquired still other lands nearby. He was eventually known as the richest man in Middleton. The tax records give proof that this reputation was more than mere rumor, for in the 1760's he and Thomas Cave paid the highest rates in town.

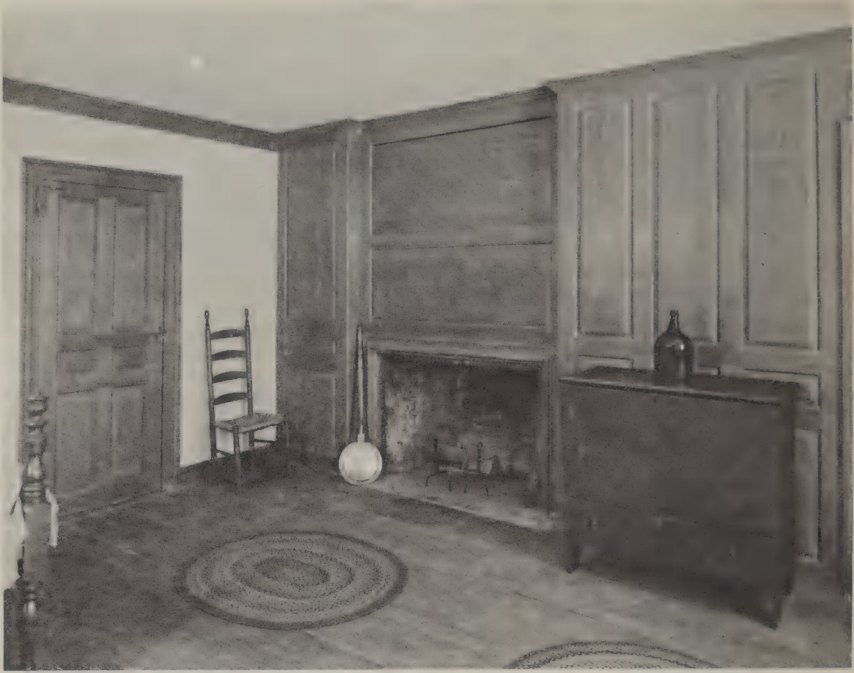
For years and years Andrew Fuller held the important town offices, sometimes several at the same time. During the 1750's he was town clerk, selectman, and even assessor as well, except in the periods when he was fighting in the French and Indian wars. In that struggle he was captain of a company — hence his title. When he was away he was relieved of his town duties temporarily, but was soon re-elected to the same offices or others. These responsibilities he gave up in 1782 and two years later retired altogether from public affairs. This career of more than thirty years must have been based on the respect and perhaps the affection of the townspeople.

In 1748, on May 11, Andrew Fuller married Elizabeth Clarke of Salem. One would be tempted to think that the couple began housekeeping on East Street, were it not for the fact that Fuller always paid his taxes as a resident of the western division of town. Whether he used his father's house at all is uncertain. The date of the so-called Capt. Andrew Fuller house cannot therefore be accurately determined. The opinion of several architectural historians places it at about 1750. This verdict is based on the style of its paneling, moldings, bannisters, fireplaces, and other architectural features. In many respects it duplicates details in the Estey Tavern, built in 1753 by Samuel Bradford, a carpenter, who may also have worked on the Fuller house.

The exterior of the house shows a bulky, rather high, center-chimney structure. Restored to its original condition after its purchase by Charles Hadley Watkins in 1952, it has exactly the same form and dimensions given in the state census for taxation purposes made in 1798. The only change is the addition of one window, a fact determined by the number of square feet of window glass given in the census. At this date the farm consisted of 158 acres, and there was a barn eighty-two feet long and thirty-two feet wide, and a cider house thirty-two by twenty-two.

This house is a more pretentious dwelling than the average country farmhouse. The ceilings are rather high, and the four front rooms are beautifully paneled on the inner walls and finished with cornices. The original wide floor boards are still in place in every room. The fireplaces are unusually generous. The one in the kitchen measures eight feet, eight inches, inside. In its back wall are two separate ovens. Before the restoration was begun, this fireplace was filled solidly with brick, the lintel had been removed, and a tiny hearth was the only evidence of its original purpose. The little fireplace was flanked at the right by a later brick oven with an iron door, and behind a door on the other side a great iron cauldron for heating water had been built in. After the late brickwork had been removed and a new lintel of red oak inserted, the fireplace appeared as it was when first built, even to the slots for holding lugpole carriers. Wooden carriers and lugpole are now doing duty for the trammels that hold the kettles. There is also evidence — a crane-eye — that at a later period a large crane served this purpose. The fireplaces in the four front rooms and the upstairs north room now used as a study are large and in good condition, and required almost no restoration.

The original kitchen ran across the entire north end of the house, ex-



172 West bedroom in Capt. Andrew Fuller house, c. 1750.

cept for a small bedroom at the west end. A passage way and pantry at the east end appeared to be of somewhat later origin, and have been removed. The passage led to a large batten door, which was no doubt at one time an outside entrance, although it has for many years led into a shed. In restoring the kitchen it was necessary to remove a modern partition that made a dining room of the northwest corner, and to replace the wall of the early bedroom in its proper place. The old partition had been built, not with studs, but with planks set about six inches apart, and it was thus reconstructed.

Wainscotting and sheathing of feather-edged boards was found in the kitchen and an original open cupboard stood at the left of the fireplace. This was duplicated by a restoration on the right-hand side following an indication .of its dimensions on the floor boards.

Several reminders of the Fullers' life in the house may be seen. In the southeast bedroom the name *Fuller* is scratched across the paneling above the fireplace and on a lower panel the word *Middleton* appears. On the sheathed wall of the back stairway is a chalk drawing of two ships. Since Capt. Andrew's son Andrew also became a mariner, either of them may have indulged in this flight of fancy.

The back of the house upstairs is now divided into a passage, a central north room, and a small west bedroom. In the north room there is a large set of bookshelves over the fireplace. They may have been built by Rev. Ebenezer Hubbard, who lived in the house from 1816 to 1828, and who had charge of Middleton's social library — one of the earliest in the state.

The attic is extremely high and its roof is made rigid by four roof-trees, or braced posts. Through the center rises the huge chimney, which is supported in the cellar by a magnificent brick arch. In the basement, too, a dairy room with brick floor was provided to keep the milk cold. The cellar walls are at least two feet thick.

Capt. Fuller conveyed this "mansion house" to his son John April 1, 1790 (152-231), partly in consideration of his paying certain sums to his brother Andrew and sister Betty, but "more especially for the love and good will I bare to my said son John." It seems likely that Andrew's retirement from active affairs had been occasioned by some physical disability. However, he lived until 1802, and his wife survived him until 1812. John was already married and the father of two children. Two more were born in the house shortly afterwards. It may be said that at least sixteen children first saw the light of day in this old house and several others grew up in it.

John Fuller did not have the business acumen nor the mentality of his father. He was a building contractor and was chosen by the town in 1802 to remodel the church. There were no specifications for the contract, yet the town kept voting for more and more improvements and changes. In the end they did not have enough money to pay for the work and John was the loser. From that time — the year of his father's death — he was in financial difficulties. He kept mortgaging and selling the land and eventually lost the entire farm and the house. In 1816 it was purchased by Rev. Ebenezer Hubbard, a Harvard graduate and son of the Marblehead minister of the same name.

When Hubbard left Middleton in 1828, he sold the farm to Washington Berry, son of a long-time resident of the town (248-194). Berry lived there only six years, but they were active ones. In 1831 a rupture in the church led to a reorganization and a new building. Berry raised the money for the church almost singlehanded. The meetings of church members, about forty in number, who conducted its affairs, were held in the Fuller house for nearly a year.

Berry sold the house to Daniel Richardson, and it belonged to him and his descendants until it was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Watkins in 1952. Richardson and his wife, the former Olive Berry Perkins, had two daughters, Ann Jane and Olive Maria, and two sons, Henry Jackson and Daniel Warren, both of whom became Congregational ministers. The family was very active in church affairs and much respected in the town.

After the death of Daniel Richardson in May 1867, his widow lived in the house for nearly twenty years with a sister, Mrs. Betsey Carleton, also a widow. When Mrs. Richardson died in 1885, her sons, who inherited the farm from their father, made some drastic "improvements." The woodwork was painted and the rooms papered with hangings of the gloomiest description. The twelve-over-twelve windows were replaced by large panes and, in consequence, the casings were narrowed to accommodate sash weighs. A large bay window was added to the front room on the west. The front door was retired to the shed and a new one with engraved glass panels and a door bell was installed. Fortunately, the transom over the old door was not destroyed, but was left in the attic. The small downstairs bedroom was enlarged to make a dining room and the fireplaces closed to accommodate hot-air stoves. The wide board floors were covered with mattings and carpets.

To this rejuvenated mansion Daniel Richardson's daughter Ann Jane, now Mrs. Benjamin Howe, came with her family in 1887. At this time the oldest daughter, Annie, was twenty-nine, her sister Nellie, twenty-three, and a son Galen nineteen. Mr. Howe died the following year; again the head of the household was a widow. She died in 1914 and Annie Howe passed away in 1921, leaving the house occupied by Nellie and Galen.

Nellie Howe was a schoolteacher, beloved and respected by everyone in Middleton. The Howe-Manning School bears her name. Except for a brief period when her brother brought a wife to the home, they lived together in the old house. When she was about eighty, Miss Howe was obliged to leave her long-time home as the result of a fall. She was never able to return, although she lived to the age of ninety-three. Galen Howe remained in the house alone for two years or more, when he, too, succumbed to the infirmities of old age. During the Howe occupation little was done to change the house, and that was probably a happy thing for its appearance today.

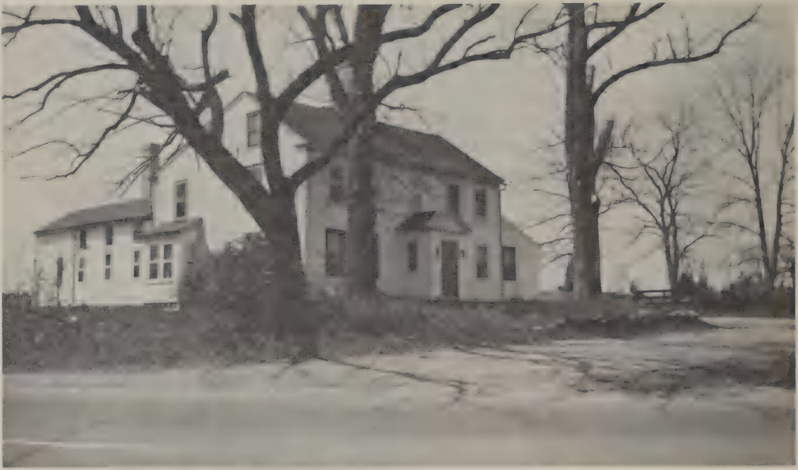
THE HOUSE OF COLONEL ARCHELAUS FULLER

Benjamin Fuller was the fifth and next to the youngest son of the first Thomas Fuller. His line produced men of character and intelligence and is still memorialized by a house on South Main Street now called, from a later occupant, the "Daniel Fuller" house. It has been converted to the purposes of a restaurant, but still retains some original features.

Benjamin Fuller was born April 15, 1660, and married Sarah Bacon December 15, 1685. No visible evidence of his dwelling remains, but a cellar hole near the present mansion marked its location within recent memory. It was built on a large tract that Benjamin's father gave him for "true Love and Naturall affection" on June 18, 1698 (15-288).[3] The property comprised several parcels of upland, swamp, and meadow, partly in Salem and partly in Reading. The northeast corner bounded on Price's meadow lying along the Ipswich River; thence the boundary ran west a considerable distance and south to Phelps's line (later the Hutchinson farm); then east along the Ipswich River until it met Thomas Fuller's land. This was the home farm of Benjamin and his descendants. He was also given land at "Great Beachy Meadow," an area north of the present School Street, running east to the old line of the Capt. Corwin farm.

Benjamin Fuller had two sons and four daughters. The younger son, Samuel, married Mary Littlefield in 1710 and may have lived in the family home. On June 4, 1728, he sold his father two pieces of land containing more than twenty-eight acres (66-30). There was no dwelling house, but the deed mentions a barn and a blacksmith shop. Samuel moved to Connecticut.

In 1733 Benjamin, Sr., and his son Benjamin were living together in the homestead. On November 10 of that year (65-232), the father transferred to his son "for love, good will and natural affection — that land & farme On the which We Now live both Tillage, Mowing and pasture-



House on South Main Street built by Col. Archelaus Fuller in 1759.

ing and Woodland with the dwelling-house and barn that Standeth thereon." The younger Benjamin thus became sole owner of the farm more than twenty years before his father's death in 1754.

Benjamin, Jr., and his wife Mary, who was his second cousin and daughter of Thomas Fuller 3d., had eight children. Four of them died young. The others were sons — Archelaus, Daniel, Andrew, and Benjamin. Archelaus, the eldest, was born May 4, 1727. Since he was the builder of the house now standing, his story is of particular interest. On August 10, 1752, he married Hannah Richardson. After her death, he was again married, April 17, 1759, to Betty (Dale) Putnam, widow of Israel Putnam. The new house was probably built for her. It is first mentioned in a deed from Benjamin to his son Archelaus dated October 29, 1765, (124-99). The circumstances of this conveyance are a touching testimonial to the character of a good son and brother. His father made the gift, partly for "Assisting me in the Education of his Brothers to the Amount of one hundred and fifty pounds," but "more especially for love." By this transfer Benjamin made over to Archelaus one half of all his lands in Middleton, also half of his barn, which stood on his son's land, and half of the cider mill and cider house that stood on his own. He also gave him half of his stock of cattle and land in Andover.

The full significance of the sacrifice made by the older brother becomes apparent when we realize that he was able to get practically no education himself, while making it possible for his brothers Daniel and Andrew to obtain degrees from Harvard College. Daniel Fuller became a minister. He was ordained as pastor of the second Congregational parish in Gloucester January 10, 1770, and remained there for fifty years, until age and illness forced his retirement. He is said to have been "true, pure and generous." During the Revolution and the War of 1812, when his parishioners were suffering deprivation and want, he refused to take any money from them for his support. Daniel Fuller wrote a diary during the Revolution, which was edited and privately published in 1894.[4]

Archelaus Fuller served his country in two wars. In 1759 he was a lieutenant in Capt. Andrew Fuller's company in the French and Indian wars. A journal that he kept during the expedition against Ticonderoga in 1758 has been preserved in the Essex Institute and published in their *Historical Collections*.[5] His painful struggles with spelling are evidence of his lack of education. He was, nevertheless, a man of great natural ability. On February first, 1775, he was chosen as a representative from Middleton to the Provincial Congress that met in Cambridge. In the Revolution he was given the rank of major at the beginning of the conflict, and he headed the Middleton contingent that left for camp at Winter Hill in the summer of 1775. A year later, on August 25, he died of smallpox at Charlestown, New Hampshire at the age of forty-nine. He had then attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel by which he is now remembered.

Benjamin Fuller was then still alive, but he died before November 10, perhaps from shock and grief at the loss of his noble son. In 1767 he had made a charming will providing for every possible contingency that might arise for his dear wife Mary and making her the gift of a negro girl named Tamer. By this will he had planned to leave his homestead of eighty acres, valued at 180 pounds, and a lot of land in Andover worth thirty pounds, to Archelaus, while bequeathing sums of money to his other sons and daughters. The farm now went to the heirs of Archelaus.

The colonel's children were all minors at the time of his death. The first three were girls, who all eventually married and left town. The older son, Benjamin, after his marriage to Abigail, the daughter of Dr. Silas Meriam, moved to Norway, Maine, where he lived to a good old age. The son Daniel was left with his mother in possession of the farm and its two houses. The widow Betty always lived in the mansion house that Archelaus had built for her and she died there in 1822 at the age of ninety-six. In the state list of lands and buildings made in 1798, Betty and Daniel Fuller are named as the owners and occupants of the mansion. It is described as having two stories and covering 1178 square feet of land. It then had nineteen windows of moderate size. With the house was listed a barn sixty by thirty feet. This also served the other part of the farm, which was said to be owned and occupied by Daniel Fuller. On this second part of the homestead there was "an old cyder house" twenty-nine feet long by twenty-one feet wide — undoubtedly the same one given by Benjamin to Archelaus in 1765. On this land there was also a small two-story house, which must have been the old dwelling of the first Benjamin Fuller and his son. It had only nine windows, containing forty-three square feet of glass. The earliest houses often had just such tiny windows. The building had disappeared by about 1824.

Daniel Fuller became one of Middleton's most prominent citizens. He usually enjoyed the courtesy title Esquire. He is said to have been a man of great practical ability and of upright, concientious character, and his widowed mother had seen to it that he got at least the beginning of an education at Phillips Andover Academy, where he was a student in 1785.

The Middleton assessors' record of 1835 shows that Daniel Fuller's house, barn, and land were worth $875, while his tracts of pasture, meadow, and woodland were valued at $4147. In addition he then owned the former Estey saw and grist mills on Andover Brook near Forest Street.

Daniel married Sally Estey, the daughter of John, November 29, 1798, and they had eleven children, seven of whom were sons. Two died in infancy or early childhood; the eldest, Archelaus, became a doctor, but lived in Fairfield, Maine; Thomas, in 1831, went as ship's mate on a voyage, and the ship was never heard of again; George W. moved to Galena, Illinois; Samuel and Elbridge both died unmarried in their thirties. This left Jeremiah, born June 17, 1809, to run the farm and make it his home. He married Eunice L. Pike of Ossipee, New Hampshire, in 1841, and they lived in one half of the Fuller house, while the unmarried sister Sophronia had the other half. Thus, after the death of Col. Archelaus Fuller, the mansion was always occupied by two families and came to have the character of a double house. Daniel Fuller lived there until his death in 1855.

Sophronia Fuller was a woman of some note, about whom memories cling. The following paragraph about her was published in the *Christian Leader*, December 22, 1892:

> Miss Sophronia Fuller — last survivor of Daniel Fuller, Esq. Great church worker and taught in district schools in Middleton, Andover, Danvers, and elsewhere for a longer period probably than any other female of the vicinity. Took deep interest in town affairs and after her father's death was much consulted in the settlement of estates — and matters of probate. Much of her leisure was given over to genealogy of her family and incidentally to the Esteys (her mother was one.) To preserve the homestead in the Fuller name became a passion in her last days and she occupied with her brother Jeremiah, who died February last, the house where she was born (December 19, 1803) and near the site of an earlier house standing as late or later than 1824.

Jeremiah's son Daniel, born April 18, 1846, succeeded him on the farm and ran it successfully. He married Myra, daughter of Gustavus H. Tufts, who lived on the old Timothy Perkins place on Essex Street, and had three daughters born between 1888 and 1897. By this time, even in Middleton, which was still only a country town, farming had seen its best day. Daniel's brothers and sisters had sought something more sophisticated than planting, haying, and raising cattle, and we find them scattered in suburban towns such as Lynn and Melrose. Even his brothers Dean and John, who remained in town, followed careers of their own choosing. So the second Daniel Fuller was the last of the family to live in the colonial manion that now bears his name. In 1957 it was repaired for use as a dining place by Phillip Abell. He eliminated many old features, but restored some others. In spite of its vicissitudes, it still retains certain things that testify to its former beauty. In the room at the left of the central entryway, there is fine mid-eighteenth century paneling on the fireplace wall. The south end of the back room contains a huge fireplace, which, if opened, would contribute greatly to the air of antiquity. The north room upstairs is sheathed around the fireplace wall with feather-edged boards that were formerly painted an old brick red. These were covered for years under plastering, but are now visible once more. The Middleton Historical Society was given what must have been the original front door. It has extremely large H and L hinges and a handsome latch.

THE BRAY WILKINS HOUSE

The only house still standing in Middleton that was built by an early member of the Wilkins family is the ancient saltbox at the extreme end of Mill Street, now owned by George W. Smith of Swampscott.

It will be remembered that Bray Wilkins was the first settler in Will's Hill, the part of the town that was originally Salem, or Salem Village. He had come in 1659 with his five sons and his brother-in-law, John Gingell, to found a truly patriarchal community.

John Gingell never married. When he died, his estate north of the pond went to John Wilkins, who later transferred Gingell's house to Thomas, his brother. Thomas lived there until his death in 1717. His oldest son, Thomas, born May 26, 1673, and a younger son, Bray, born November 13, 1675, settled in Boxford in the section later part of Middleton. Thomas married Elizabeth Towne of Topsfield in 1694 and shortly thereafter was taking part in Boxford affairs. His homestead stood on what is now Liberty Street opposite the end of School Street.

Bray Wilkins, who married Rebecca Knight, February 10, 1701/2, settled on the east side of Beech (Boston) Brook, across from his brother. On June 26, 1703, their father deeded land to them (15-244). This was a tract of one hundred acres, a part of the former Carrell farm, lying on both sides of the stream. Bray Wilkins had eleven children, of whom six were sons: Israel, born 1705/6; Phineas, 1708; Abner, bp. 1711; Ithacar, 1711; Joshua, 1718; Ichabod, 1720. Joshua went to Mont Vernon, New Hampshire, before 1776; and Israel may have lived with his sons in Hollis, New Hampshire, after they removed there in 1757. The land records concern Israel, Phineas and Ichabod.

It is almost a certainty that the Smith house is the original home of Bray Wilkins, but the early land records are difficult to follow and seemingly incomplete. We know that Bray conveyed thirty acres of his holdings to Thomas, October 12, 1724 (43-294), and that on March 12, 1734, he gave his son Phineas a twenty-acre piece along Beech Brook adjoining his own land (72-71). On the day preceding this transfer Wilkins "for good will and natural affection" conveyed to his oldest son, Israel, "A certain messuage or Tenement Scituate in Middleton aforesaid Consisting of Half a Dwelling house & twenty acres of land adjoining thereto" (79-43). The boundary line went through the center of the house and the land given with it went southeast and east to a line bounding on Nathaniel, Samuel, and Zorobabel Peabody. Presumably, Bray and Israel occupied the house together.

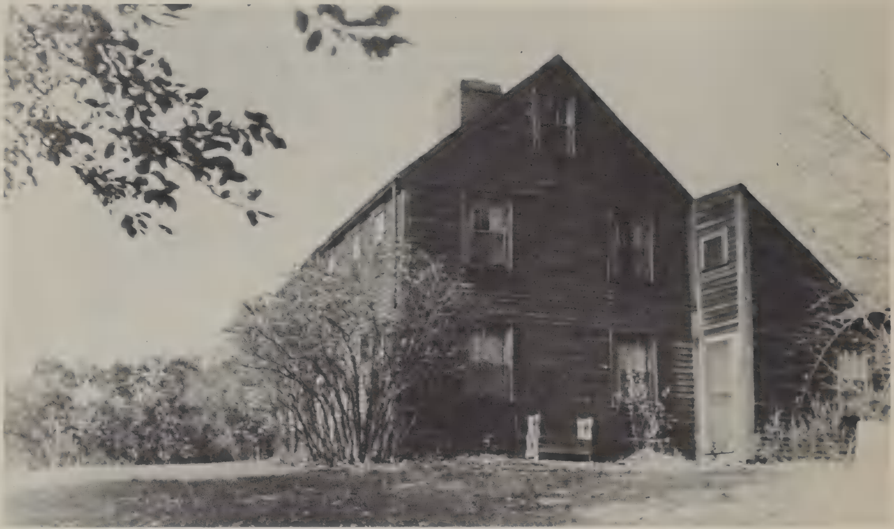
Ichabod, Bray's youngest son, married Mary Clark on May 9, 1744. Six years later, January 28, 1750, he paid his father £100 for forty acres lying west of Israel's land (96-188). In this deed there is no mention of a house. The westerly bounds ran along Phineas Wilkins's line and followed down to the brook. It is probable that Ichabod Wilkins was then sharing the homestead. Two years later the brothers made an exchange of property, each deeding to the other lands with "all Bildings thereon." Ichabod was to bound south on the brook, west and north on Phineas Wilkins, and east on Israel down to the brook; Israel was to have land and buildings with forty acres bounding from the brook north or northward "to their Dwelling house," and through the house to a point two or three rods north of it, and so eastwardly and southwardly by Philip Knight and the Peabodys back to the brook and up stream to the first bound. This was on June 1, 1752 (111-162).

Up to this point the record is fairly clear. The next transaction poses problems about what occurred later. Israel, on May 2, 1764, sold his eastern half of the dwelling and the lands described above to Zorobabel Peabody. It has been impossible to learn whether Peabody ever used this half of the house or whether Ichabod continued to live in it, if he ever did. From later records it looks as if this transfer could have been a mortgage.

There is also the possibility that Ichabod had put up a house on his forty acres. There are, in fact, cellar holes east of the Smith house, where, according to Martha J. Averill,[6] Ichabod lived at one time. Mrs. Averill got her information from Andrew Gould, who said that the house had disappeared by the time he was born in 1806. Since Ichabod was too young to have built Mr. Smith's house, anything he may have erected can be ruled out as the Bray Wilkins homestead.

It is the opinion of Abbott Lowell Cummings, whom I have quoted elsewhere, that the Smith house was probably not erected before 1700, but very soon afterwards. This would agree with Bray's marriage date of 1701/2 and the year 1703 when his father gave him the land.

There is no other person in the early Wilkins family, the only settlers in this area, who would have been old enough to have built a dwelling at such an early period, with the exception possibly of Henry Wilkin's son Nehemiah, who was born in 1683. That he built a house on his father's land is verified in a deed (75-37) dated October 12, 1718, when Henry



The farmhouse first occupied by Bray Wilkins, grandson of Bray. Appears to date from the time of his marriage in 1701.

gave lands to his son John, "Excepting that Lot of Land which my son Nehemiah Built his House upon which I reserve to be at my own Disposeing." Henry "disposed" of this lot by selling it to his grandson Daniel Wilkins, 3d., then a student at Cambridge and later the first minister at Amherst, New Hampshire. It was a tract of sixty acres, "The which peice & Parcell of Land my Son Nehemiah Wilkins built upon on the North side of Beachy brook so called." Daniel Wilkins sold what appears to be this same sixty-acre lot to Phineas Wilkins, June 14, 1736 (70-267). In the deed there is no mention of a house on the property. Nehemiah Wilkins was no longer living when his father made his will in November 1737. The wording of the document suggests that the house may not have been in existence for some years. Obviously, Nehemiah's house was not the one owned today by George W. Smith. In 1752 this land, still owned by Phineas Wilkins, is mentioned as lying to the west and north of Ichabod Wilkins's line.

The events which finally identify Ichabod's land and house as the Smith place are particularly interesting. Ichabod had a son Elijah, born January 8, 1746, who was a tanner. In 1765, when only nineteen, he married Mary Wilkins, a girl still younger, whose connection with other members of the family is unknown. Elijah was a young man of parts, who prospered in his career. In the Revolution he served briefly as corporal in the company of Capt. Asa Prince of Danvers in response to the alarm of April 19, 1775, and he was commissioned as second lieutenant in Capt. Benjamin Peabody's Fourth Essex County Regiment of Massachusetts Militia on September 26, 1778. Earlier in that year he had been chosen by the town as one of a committee to oversee the hiring and payment of men going into the army. In June, 1779, he was placed on a committee for hiring soldiers and for raising money to pay them. In 1778 and again in 1779 he was on the board of selectmen.

On August 24, 1778, Elijah invested in 130 acres of upland and meadow ground, which he purchased at a cost of £400 from Phineas Wilkins, his father's brother (148-142). The boundary line began southerly at Beech Brook, and ran northerly by land of Ichabod 200 poles (more than half a mile) to land of Deacon Francis Peabody; thence west and south by Elisha Nichols and Samuel Wilkins; then east and south to the first bounds. There was no house on this property; Phineas Wilkins must have lived elsewhere. He died before the deed could be recorded.

Meantime Elijah and Mary had been raising a family of six children, the last born in the spring of 1780. Elijah had built a barn and a tan barn on the land and apparently carried on his activities near a small brook northwest of the Smith house. There may still be seen in this location a deep pit or pool, man made, which was either a reservoir or a tan vat. It is nearly twelve feet in diameter and about five feet deep. It seems likely that during these years Elijah lived in the old Bray Wilkins house, as he had no house of his own.

In 1780 tragedy struck these promising young people. Elijah died suddenly in August and in November Mary followed him. A very complicated administration of their estate ensued. On August 29, immediately after the death of her husband, Mary had bought of his father, Ichabod, what by later transactions we can positively identify as the Smith house. The deed (140-274) is so important, I quote it herewith:

> Ichabod Wilkins of Middleton, yeoman, to Mary Wilkins of Middleton, widow — for £60 — a certain tract of land situated in Middleton — containing one acre, bounded as follows — beginning at the northerly corner of said Ichabod's land at the end of the wall that parts the land between the said Ichabod Wilkins and Elijah Wilkins dec'd at the corner of said Elijah's cow yard; thence running eastwardly as the wall now stands about twelve rods to a large stone in the wall; thence running northerly up the hill about sixteen poles to a stake and stones; thence running upon a strait line about thirteen rods to a stake & stones westerly; thence running southwest partly upon a straight line to he bounds first mentioned with the buildings thereon standing.

It will be seen that this one acre of land enclosing the house was on Ichabod's western boundary line and was taken out of his land.

It was a number of years before the estate was settled. In 1785 the property was appraised by Andrew Peabody, Samuel Wilkins, and Asa How. On September 5 they completed separate inventories of the possessions of husband and wife. This appraisal is one of the most remarkable to appear in Middleton records. Rarely do we find a complete listing of the things owned and used by two persons who died before middle life. Elijah was thirty-four and Mary not much over thirty. So it is not surprising to find in the inventory more of the small luxuries of life than would have been owned by some aged farmer. Such items probably indicate a degree of material prosperity accruing from Elijah's unusual trade of tanner. Only one other tanner has been found in Middleton — Jonathan Fuller, who left town in 1740.

In contrast to the scanty wardrobe of most Middleton widows, we find that Mary was well equipped in this respect. She owned:

a black Homspun Cloak 30/
3 Silk Hankerchiefs 18/
a Calico Gown 4/9
two Checkard hankerchiefs 3/
two old Coats 4/6
two shifts 12/

Messinet Gown 30/
a grorum Gown 60/[7]
a Chene Gown 18/[8]
Poplin Gown 36/
a Linnen & wool Gown 24/
a Callemink quilted Coat 60/[9]
a Lorn (lawn) apron 12/
a black silk apron 20/
an old Shalone[10]
three Checkard aprons 21/
a Rideing hood 40/6
two Ribbens 3/
a bunnet 13/6
four yards of black Lace 6/
a pair of half Sleaves & a Cap 1/6
a pair of Silver Shoe buckles 15/
a pair of Stone buttens 2/

Elijah was equally well supplied with clothing:

a great Coat Carsy 36/
a brown Coat 18/
a Sagethe Coat 12/[11]
a blue Coat 9/
another Blue Coat 22/6
Six westcots 55/6
a pair of Leather Breaches 36/
three pair of Breaches 27/
a bever hat 36/
three pair of Shoes 3/
a Stock buckle 6/
a brooch 1/6
a pair of knee buckles 6/
a pair of Shoe buckles 15/

There is good evidence that some of this clothing was the product of Mary's industry. The couple owned a loom and spinning wheel, and there are numerous entries of linen, cotton, woolen, and tow yarn, flax in the bundle, sheep's wool, and tow and linen cloth.

Their furniture, except for dishes and utensils, was negligible — an indication that they were living in the old family home already furnished. Listed are but four bedsteads, two tables, three small chests, and ten chairs.

The items relating to Elijah's trade as tanner, and also shoemaker, have importance beyond his personal story. He owned numerous animals, some of them no doubt raised to supply skins. Among them are two pairs of oxen, a pair of steers, nine cows, two calves and a heifer, twelve sheep, three swine, and two horses. The entries pertaining to his business are listed in the section on shoemaking. The inventory mentions every imaginable kind of equipment for running a farm, including a wagon, oxsleds, and a horse sled, but no carriage or chaise. A side saddle and pillion were the provisions for traveling when Mary rode out to church or went visiting.

The house, farm, and appurtenances were not sold until 1788. At that time, Benjamin Peabody, Francis Peabody, and Andrew Eliot were in charge of the estate. Benjamin Peabody advertised it for sale as follows:

TO BE SOLD

> By virtue of a resolve of the General Court, at Publick Vendue, ON MONDAY the 5th of May next at 1 o'clock, in the afternoon, *All* the real estate of Elijah Wilkins, late of Middleton, in the county of Essex, Gent., dec'd; and ALSO, the Real Estate of Mary Wilkins, late of said Middleton, widow (of said Elijah) deceased, consisting of about ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY acres of LAND, with a DWELLING HOUSE, BARN, and other Buildings thereon, being Tillage, Pasture, and Mowing Land, well watered and about THIRTY-FIVE ACRES OF LAND consisting of Mowing, Wood, and Pasture Land, lying partly in said Middleton, and partly in Boxford and Andover, in said County. The sale to be at the late mansion house of said Elijah and Mary, on the premises in said Middleton.
>
> *Middleton, March 29, 1788*

The auction took place on July 15, and Samuel Wilkins, 2d., bid in the 120 acres of land and buildings for £210. This took in the dwelling and the one acre sold by Ichabod to Mary, the sum of £30 paid for it being included in the whole. Samuel Wilkins was the grandson of Bray's brother Thomas, who had settled west of the brook. Samuel was now sole owner of the Thomas Wilkins homestead, as his brother Thomas in 1773 had signed over to him his rights in the inheritance. He retained the house bought at auction until 1794. In the meantime repairs were made on the buildings, fences, and walls, and the house was rented for at least part of the time. In September 1790, one Thomas Clark, perhaps a relative of Ichabod's wife Mary (Clark), was paid twelve pounds by the administrators for giving up a lease of the place. Samuel Wilkins was made guardian of the three youngest children and was paid £69. 18.9. for his services on June 6, 1791. The older children were given money out of the estate.

Wilkins had made a good investment in buying the property. On April 4, 1794 (167-205), he sold sixty acres with the dwelling house and barn thereon to Samuel Small of Middleton, a housewright, for £190. Small lived there for nine years, selling the place May 27, 1803 (174-286), with fifty-five acres, to Francis Peabody, 2d., of Middleton. Again, six years later, February 6, 1809, it was transferred to Elijah Case (187-2). Case occupied the old house until March 15, 1820, when he conveyed it to James Wilkins of Middleton, a cordwainer (222-148). The boundaries expressed in these different transactions are always the same, with allowance for change of ownership of the abuttors. There is not the least doubt that the house is the same one owned by Ichabod Wilkins and sold by him to Mary in 1780.

With James Wilkins we come to the era of maps, where his name appears on what is undoubtedly the Smith property. The Middleton map of 1830[12] and the Essex County chart of 1856[13] both locate it in his name. James Wilkins conveyed his lands and buildings to his son Edward Wilkins on August 11, 1870 (812-263), on the condition that Edward should provide a comfortable home there for his parents in any two rooms they might select, and that Edward should not mortgage the farm during their lifetime.

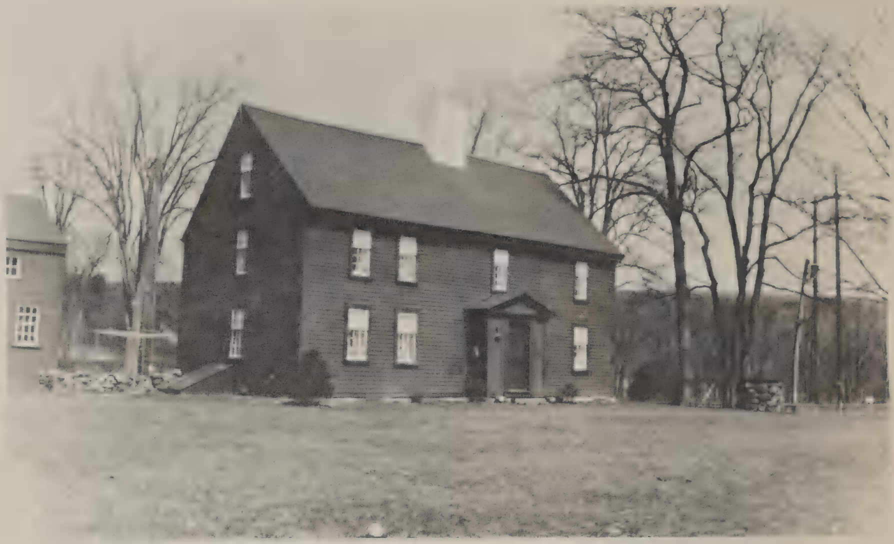
The latter stipulation was a difficult one. Edward and his brother Adrian after the Civil War had built a new sawmill on Boston Brook where the old Peabody mill had stood. Caught up in the depression following the war, the Wilkins's venture had not succeeded, and Edward was on the verge of bankruptcy. After his father's death he was obliged to mortgage the farm to the Danvers Savings Bank, which still held title to it as late as 1884. Wilkins was a man of determined character and he lived to pay off all his debts and to accumulate a sizeable estate.

THE DEACON EDWARD PUTNAM, JR., HOUSE

One of the oldest houses of record in Middleton is the former dwelling of Deacon Edward Putnam, Jr., which stands on Gregory Street a short distance south of Maple Street at Howe Station. It was probably built in 1705 at the time of Edward's marriage. His father, Deacon Edward Putnam, provided each of his sons with lands and a house when they set up housekeeping, although actual deeds were not given at the time. His deed of gift to Edward is dated January 16, 1718/19, the same day when he transferred to his son Elisha the house later purchased by Cornet Francis Peabody. Both documents mention the land "on which his houseing and fences now Stands."

Sidney Perley, in his detailed study of the land records of this vicinity, shows that no house existed on this site in 1700.[14] A passage from the Topsfield town records mentions it as being there in 1708. In that year Topsfield laid out a road that came over the hill near the present County Sanatorium, starting at the house of John Nichols (later Ferncroft Inn), and running by the homes of John Burton, the Cheevers, Thomas Robinson, and Philip Knight, "and so on as the Cartway now goes till it comes to the River by or beyond Edward Putnam's house."[15] Maple Street now follows this same course as it approaches the bridge.

Edward Putnam, Sr., an educated man and a large landholder, always attended the Salem Village church, although part of his farm lay in the section that was included in Middleton in 1728. His house stood a short distance north of the Middleton line. The younger Edward and his wife, the former Sarah Miles of Concord, were admitted to the Salem Village church in January 1708, but were members of the Middleton parish after



Deacon Edward Putnam, Jr. was living in this house in 1707. Probably built by his father, Edward, Sr., when his son was married in 1705.

1729. Edward became a deacon there in 1738 and was active in town affairs, being the first town clerk and one of the first selectmen.

Father and son were instrumental in founding the ironworks on Pout Pond Brook. In fact, they helped to put up the necessary buildings. When Edward, Sr., made his will, March 11, 1731, he mentioned in a bequest to his son Ezra his "share in the Ironworks and that new house that I built for Coal. I also give him my share of that house where the Chimney is That I & Thos Cave & my son Edward built." The old deacon lived to the age of ninety-four, dying March 10, 1747.

Ezra Putnam lived south of his brother Edward. Their dividing line was marked by a stone wall that ran west from what is now Gregory Street across "the island," a rounded ridge or drumlin, which actually becomes an island at seasons of high water — to end at a stone in the Ipswich River. This boundary wall still stands north of the "Colony", or farm, connected with the state hospital, and it has a peculiar significance, because the stone in the river marked the "Indian Bridge", or ford, mentioned in Edward, Sr.'s will and other documents.[16]

Edward Putnam, Jr., was married four times, although his large family of ten were all children of his first wife, Sarah. The last of them was born in 1727. On September 3, 1735, he married Mrs. Priscilla Jewett of Rowley, widow of Nehemiah Jewett. She lived but a year. A few months later, on February 24, 1736, he again assumed the bonds of matrimony with Martha Nurse, widow of Francis Nurse of Reading. The third Mrs. Putnam also passed away within a few years, and Edward then married Widow Mary Wilkins on November 29, 1743.

Edward Putnam died October 23, 1755, leaving all his lands, buildings, and cattle to his son Miles, who was then thirty years old and next to the youngest of the family. All the others, with one exception, had moved away from Middleton before 1746, three of them to Sutton, Massachusetts, and two of the daughters to New Hampshire. In his will Edward directed that his wife Mary should have the lower room in the east end of the house and one-half of the cellar under it, and that Miles should provide for his mother "fier wood bread corn meet and drink sofissant for her comfortable supporte." Several of the items in this will are interesting as indicative of the Putnams' way of life. To his eldest son Holyoke Edward left his silver-headed cane; to Edward "my little cane with a horn head and silver ferrule;" to Sarah "my old puter platter with a little bit melted at the edge of it and one puter plate." The rest of the pewter was divided between his other five daughters. To his daughter Hannah Fuller he gave a "Chest of Drawers such as I gave to my daughter Mary Flint and also three puter platters of the bigness of them that I gave to my daughter Mary." Miles was to have his "Read squar table" and all the rest of his furniture except his great Bible, which was to go to his wife during her lifetime, and he left orders for Miles to "bye for my wife Mary a good white pine Chest whitch shall be at her one disposing as she pleaseth' and allso a "sute of curtings" for his sister Hannah.

Since Miles Putnam was the last of the name to own the house, this may be an appropriate time to describe its appearance and some changes that were made in it during the first half of the century. Although it now has a modern leanto, its original form is still essentially that of many four-room houses of its period, with two rooms downstairs and two rooms over them under a steep-pitched roof. Entering the hallway, one finds a stairway going up to the left, with steps to the cellar under it. It is not the original stair, which was built with winding steps. Their position is plainly discernible under the later structure. The first staircase was no doubt enclosed; the present one has a rail and bannisters, old but not original. The two rooms and hall surround a central chimney, and each room has a huge fireplace. Until 1963 there was never a leanto or a fireplace on the north side of the chimney stack.

An appreciation of the ancient quality of this house is somewhat hindered by a restyling that took place around 1800. At that time a low wainscot, plain in the west room, but bordered with a band of sunbursts and darts in the lower and upper east rooms, was added and mantelpieces of the period installed. The fireplace in the west room was greatly reduced in size. Today, restored by its present owners, Mr. and Mrs. R. Lionel Barrows, to its early dimensions, it measures ten and one-half feet inside the brickwork. An oven in the back wall was discovered and restored. It may have been one of two, such as are sometimes seen in fireplaces of that size in Essex County. Summer beams and corner posts are covered with beaded boards.

During the complete restoration of the house from its neglected condition, the owners found that the outer walls were constructed of thick planks instead of studding and there was an inner wall six or more inches within the other. Apparently this inside wall was an afterthought, not present in the original building. When the west bedroom was being restored, an interesting discovery was made: the eastern part of the house had been built some years earlier than the western half. In the framework of the chamber's east wall mortices for cross braces were found exactly where the doors from the upper hallway and a back passageway now lead into the room. At the northeast corner, the end of a girt, shrunken away from the beam designed for its continuation, shows clearly that at one time it was exposed to the elements. In fact, the east wall was once the outer wall of the house. The two rooms in the addition are larger than those of the original building. The lower room measures nineteen and one-half feet by eighteen and the bedroom nineteen and one-half feet by eighteen feet three inches. The chamber has no fireplace and has plain plastered walls with a narrow baseboard.

The 1800-type mantel has recently been removed from the east bedroom and the whole fireplace wall covered with horizontal sheathing. This must assuredly have been originally sheathed with up and down boards. Vertical sheathing of the kind used after 1700 was found over the large west room fireplace downstairs and has been replaced. The batten door leading into this large living room or "hall" is also a replacement.

Miles Putnam had left Middleton by 1757, and he sold the farm, which then contained thirty-six acres, to Enos Knight on April 12, 1758 (123-261). Knight was a shoemaker, or cordwainer, and a native of Middleton, who had married Lois Gould in 1750. He and his family occupied the house until 1784, when, after removing to New Ipswich, New Hampshire, they conveyed nineteen acres, thirty-five poles, with the buildings, to Eleazer Brown of Middleton, a blacksmith, This deed (153-234) was dated April 26, 1784. Two years later Eleazer Brown bought an additional four acres from Jonathan Knight, Enos's brother (153-234). The northeast corner of this land bounded on the road near a blacksmith shop, ran south about thirty-six poles to a stake near the northwest corner of Jonathan Knight's house, then west and north to the main road and east along the road to the first corner.

Eleazer Brown owned the house for eight years and apparently worked at his blacksmithing during that time. The account book of Benjamin Peabody [17] itemizes various charges to Brown for labor and materials. It seems likely that Eleazer Brown had the use of the blacksmith shop mentioned in the deed. It was probably an old shop previously used by John Putnam at this corner.

Brown sold the house and three tracts of land, totalling twenty-seven and three-quarters acres, to Elijah Wilkins, January 3, 1792 (154-118). Wilkins was a shoemaker, son of Elijah Wilkins, properous tanner and cordwainer of Middleton. The father died in 1780, leaving his son a legacy of some forty-seven pounds, but no real estate, as his property was sold at auction. Elijah and his wife Lucy (Peabody) lived in the Putnam house for thirteen years. He may have built the small shoe shop that stood between the house and the road until its removal about 1950 to North Main Street. The state census of estates made in 1798 notes it as being eight feet square and worth eight dollars. The barn on the place at that time was thirty-two feet long and twenty-eight feet wide and was valued at forty dollars.

When Elijah Wilkins sold the Putnam house in 1805, it was just a century old. On June 10 he conveyed it to Joseph Peabody of Salem for $1519. The estate then remained in the hands of the Peabody family until October 13, 1845, when Francis and George Peabody of Salem and John L. Gardiner and Catherine E., his wife, sold it to Stephen Wilkins of Danvers for $1542 (359-296). The property included twenty-seven and three-quarter acres, as before, with the dwelling house and all other buildings, and in addition two tracts in Pout Pond meadow and a fourteen-acre piece of woodland called the Island.

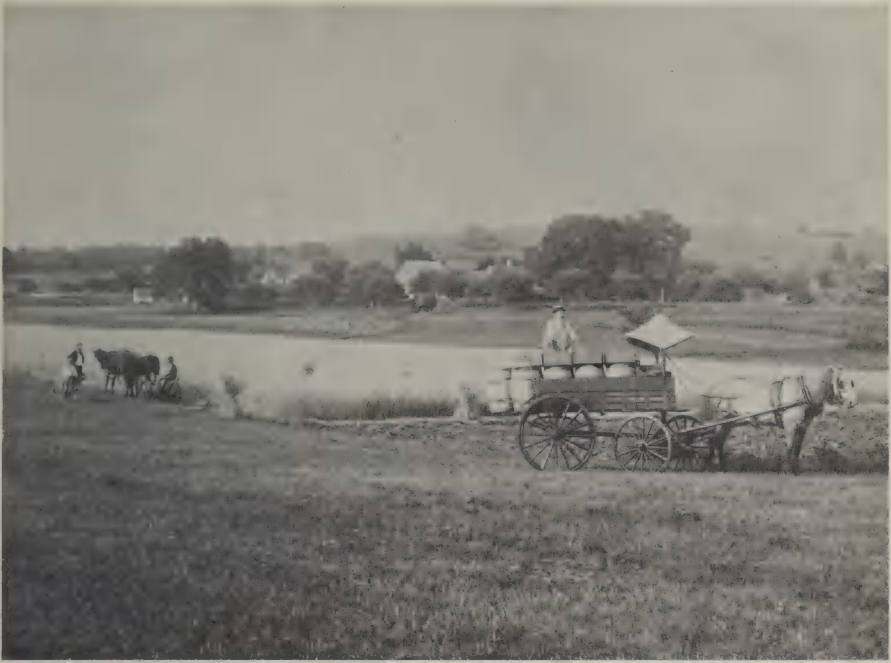
Stephen Wilkins held the farm for only a few months and then gave title to Richard Goss of Danvers, April 8, 1846 (376-267). Goss conveyed it to Cyrus K. Wilkins March 5, 1847 (378-267), and Wilkins and his wife Caroline E. (Gould), who were married in the following May, owned and occupied the place until 1883. When they finally disposed of the farm the home lot still comprised twenty-seven and three-quarter acres. It was purchased by John B. Sanford March 1, 1883 (1004-95), and was the home of the Sanford family within the memory of persons now living. The house was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Barrows in 1952.

THE TIMOTHY PERKINS HOUSE

One of the most charming old houses in Middleton is hidden behind the trees on Essex Street not far below Creighton's Pond. Its early history is more or less shrouded in the mists of time and is complicated by the fact that the name Timothy Perkins occurs in its annals through four generations. A further obstacle to exact analysis is that the area where the house stands was originally a part of Andover, but later incorporated in the new town of Middleton.

This locality along the road from Salem to Andover was already inhabited when the Perkins family bought land there. Samuel Farnum had a dwelling just north of the present Andover line in 1701/2. It was there when Ebenezer Stiles, on January 3, 1706, bought thirty acres for his own farm nearby. John Perkins, a brother of Timothy, also had a farm on the east side of the road, and one Samuel Smith lived north of the Stiles's house lot at an early date. All of these neighbors settled on the banks of the swift-running Boston Brook, where clean fresh water was available for their every purpose.

The most reliable sources about the Perkins house and its owners are found in the land records. The first of the family to buy any part of the land was Timothy, Sr., of Topsfield. Born there on August 11, 1658, he was the son of "Mr. William." He married Edna Hazen of Rowley,



View of the Edward Putnam farm from the southeast when owned by Cyrus W. Wilkins from 1847 to 1883.

August 2, 1686, and had seven sons and three daughters. The first born was Timothy, who came into the world on September 21, 1687. Both he and his baby sister Hannah were baptised at the Topsfield meeting house on July 6, 1690.

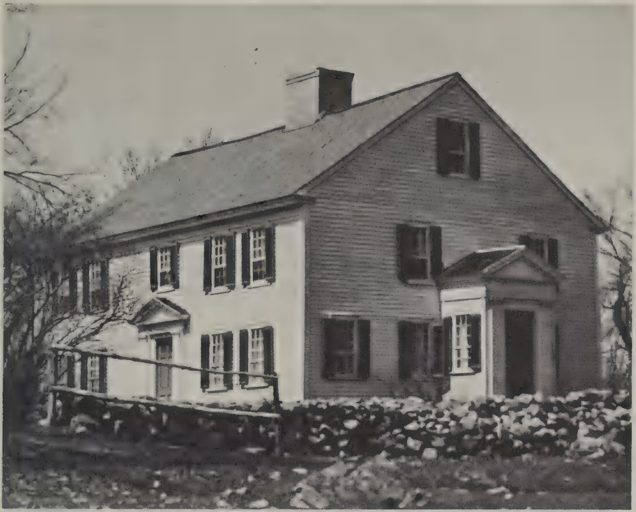
Timothy Sr., of Topsfield, bought the land where the house is situated from William Barker, Sr., his wife, and son Stephen, all of Andover, on November 1, 1706 (19-110). The purchase contained about forty acres on both sides of Boston Brook.[18]. This same land was conveyed on May 20, 1723 (48-244), by Timothy Perkins of Topsfield, husbandman, to Timothy Perkins of Andover, carpenter, "for that Natural Love & parental Effection which I do bare to my son."

Meantime the younger Timothy had married Hannah Buckstone (Buxton) daughter of John and Elizabeth (Holten) Buxton, of Salem Village, February 12, 1712/13. In the following month he purchased an acre of meadow from John Peabody (42-229). He was then of Andover, and as he was a carpenter, we may assume that it was he who built his house on the family land soon after that time. It is first mentioned in a deed from William Chandler dated April 6, 1721 (47-208). The sale comprised nine acres "lying westerly and northwesterly from *sd Perkin's Dwelling house.*" His home is again referred to in a deed of four acres "joining on the northwesterly side of the *sd Perkins' farm where he now dwelleth,*" which he bought of Nathan Stevens (47-209) on June 20, 1723.

Timothy and Hannah had six children born between 1715 and 1726. These were Jonathan, 1715; a son (Timothy), December 9, 1716; Lydia, 1722; Hannah, 1723; Sarah, 1724; and Phebe, 1726. The two oldest were baptised in Topsfield, where the parents attended church after their marriage; the girls were apparently unchristened, as the journey to Topsfield church probably became an arduous business for the mother of young children. Timothy's name appears on the list of Middleton residents who were rated for the minister in 1719, but there is no evidence that he ever became a member of the Middleton church.

The Perkins family does not seem to have been prominent in town affairs. The first Timothy's name may be found in the town records when, in July 1733, he and Deacon Samuel Symonds were chosen to look into the matter of the Salem boundary lines. In September he was on a committee of three to refer a petition to the General Court concerning some lands in Middleton that were claimed by Salem. Capt. Timothy Perkins was the moderator at the town meeting of May 1737, and was chosen for that function on many later occasions.

In 1729 Capt. Perkins had a one-quarter interest in a sawmill on the



Timothy Perkins House, Essex Street. Early eighteenth century.

brook not far from the Andover line. We learn of this when Francis Ingalls sold out his quarter share on December 5 of that year. The deed (58-106) reads:

"Francis Ingalls of Andover House Carpenter For and in consideration of a Certain Sum of Money or for the Sawing a Certain Number of Planks & Boards, — to Samuel Farnum, Junr., of Andover — all my Rights Titles priviledges in the Saw-Mill which belongs to Samuel Farnum, Samuel Smith, Timothy Perkins, Francis Ingalls, said Mill stands on Beach Brook by Salem Road. I the said Ingalls being the rightful Owner of One Quarter part of the sd Mill Warranting that sd Mill is free & Clear from all Dues Debts Mortgages Deeds or Damages of any Person whatsoever by in or under me."

On December 15, 1730 (58-106), Perkins also conveyed his right to Samuel Farnum, Jr., for fifty pounds. This deed gives the information that the mill stood "betwixt Samll Smith's and Samuel Farnum's Home Lotts said Mill is on the East side of Salem Road."

At a somewhat later time the Perkinses were running a sawmill of their own on the brook that ran under Andover Road not far north of their house. In June 1744, according to the town records, Joseph Frye, who lived to the northwest in the house now occupied by John Muzichuk on Route 114 near the Andover line, petitioned for a road to be laid out from his house "through Capt. Timothy Perkins Land to the road to the sawmill later erected." Since the elder Perkins was a carpenter, his interest in sawmills will be readily understood.

Capt. Timothy passed away at some time between 1746 and 1756. His death is not a matter of record in either town or probate statistics, but there is evidence of it in a deed dated January 29, 1742/3 (103-203, when he sold to Timothy, Jr., for £200 "The one moeitie or half part of all my Lands and medows for Quantity & Quality with all privilages & profits thereunto belonging, my Buildings exsepted, as a free & clear Inheritance unto him" — his Heirs, etc. forever. This document was witnessed by Samuel Bradford and Francis Ingalls. On July 2, 1756, they were obliged to appear at an Inferior Court of Common Pleas to testify that they had seen the deed signed, sealed, and delivered. At this time they referred to Timothy Perkins as "since deceased."

Perkins was, however, still living in 1746, when on September 27, he conveyed to his son at a price of £800, one hundred and twenty acres in Middleton and Andover (103-203). The house itself was still not made over to Timothy, Jr., but, as the only surviving son, he must have inherited it when his father died.

This second Timothy to live on the farm had married Phebe Peters, sister of the Rev. Andrew Peters, Middleton's first minister, on April 17, 1744. They had six children, among them another Timothy, born September 15, 1752. Phebe did not long survive the birth of her youngest child, nor live to inherit the property left her when her brother Andrew died in 1756. Her husband married a second time, probably in 1759, as a son was born to him and his new wife Hannah on April 2, 1760. Hannah presented him with eleven other children, and although two of them died, there was still a family of sixteen who survived.

This was a household on an expansive scale, but the Perkinses seem to have prospered at this period. Like a number of other well-to-do farmers in Middleton, they were slave holders. In 1758 Perkins advertised in the *Boston Gazette* for the return of a runaway slave, Pompey.[19]

The events leading up to the Revolution must have taken their toll on the farmer's pocketbook. As early as 1762 Timothy Perkins began to mortgage his land to cover other indebtedness. On three occasions from 1762 to 1771 he mortgaged to Andrew Fuller and Ephraim Fuller his forty-acre tract on the east side of Salem Road, and in 1769 he raised further sums on the dwelling house and eighty acres. Finally, in 1773, he put a mortgage on all his land and buildings west of the road. The conclusion seems inevitable that the Perkins family was no longer able to keep up the farm.

On December 17, 1776, the elder Timothy sold to his son Timothy, Jr., for £300 "the one half both for Quantity and Quality of all my Lands and Buildings lying in sd Middleton." Also in 1776 he gave his son for one shilling a piece of land in Middleton that had been owned by his other son Jonathan, then deceased, together with Jonathan's personal belongings and live stock. Young Timothy married Hepzibah Goodridge of Boxford, October 21, 1779, and they struggled along for a few more years, but finally decided to sell the farm.

On April 29, 1784, Timothy, Sr., with his wife Hannah, and his son and wife Hepzibah, sold the estate for £800 to Benjamin Goodridge of Boxford, Hepzibah's brother (141-180). By this deed Goodridge obtained the more than 170 acres on the west side of the road and the forty acres across the highway. Timothy, Sr., now sixty-eight years old, and possibly the whole family, moved away to Westminster, Vermont. He is next heard from in 1792, when, on June 8, he sold to Joseph Peters his title in the land his first wife had inherited from the estate of Rev. Andrew Peters (155-138). In September he also relinquished the right of his daughters Sarah and Phebe to part of the dower of Hannah Peters.

Benjamin Goodridge kept the house sixteen years. On January 11, 1800 (166-138), he sold it to Joseph Peabody, 3d., of Middleton, with the same two divisions of land and the same acreage that he had purchased in 1784. Peabody was the son of Samuel Peabody of Andover. He was nearly thirty years of age and was obviously buying the farm in anticipation of his coming marriage to Olive Berry of Middleton. This event took place on September fourth. Unfortunately for their plans, their new-found happiness was short-lived. A baby daughter, Olive was born in the following year, but the young mother was taken by death two years later, and the little one lived only to the age of five.

Joseph took a second wife to share his home on October 22, 1805. She was Anna, daughter of Jeremiah Flint, one of the owners of the Flint mills on Boston Street. They lived on the Perkins place until Joseph's death in 1853 and raised five of their six children there.

Samuel Peabody was the eldest son. In the spring following his father's death, his brothers, Jeremiah Flint, Joseph, and Dean, and his sister Ann (Mrs. William A. Phelps), made over to him for $2700 the buildings and 118 acres of land on both sides of the road (491-213), while a similar conveyance quit-claimed to Jeremiah woodland in Middleton and Andover, for which he paid $3000 (491-157). Both deeds were signed March 8, 1854.

Samuel Peabody apparently did not live in the house. In fact, when he sold it to Gustavus H. Tufts on November 11, 1856, he was of South Danvers (541-115). Tufts and his wife, the former Nancy Emeline Stiles, had been living in a small house which they had built in 1848 on Maple Street next to the building then used as the Congregational Church. They paid Peabody $1750 for the Perkins place and on the same day sold him their cottage for $1500 plus $250 to pay off a mortgage (541-114). It was almost an even exchange, except that their property had but three-quarters of an acre, while Peabody's land included sixty-nine acres. The Tufts family needed more room, for their family was growing rapidly. Eventually they had twelve children. Two little graves, still to be seen near the homestead, give mute evidence of the loss of two of them, but seven daughters and two sons survived. Tufts ran a farm there and continued his trade as a shoemaker.

This most interesting family occupied the house until after the turn of the century and a son held title to it until 1924. Many older residents remember their doings. Mrs. Tufts was artistically inclined and possessed a fine singing voice. All the children learned to make music, playing a number of instruments or singing, often in company with their Uncle Hiram and his family next door. Mrs. Stiles was a beautiful woman, as were her daughters, who had no difficulty in attracting desirable husbands. She may have felt that her opportunities for artistic expression were somewhat limited by her life on a lonesome farm. The late Mrs. Hazen K. Richardson recalled that she painted a decoration of vines and flowers around her windows to beautify the simple farmhouse.

Gustavus Tufts died on April 10, 1899, and his widow remained there until she too passed away in 1910. Her unmarried son Wilbur H., occupied the house until 1924. Meantime, on April 20, 1917, he sold fifty-seven acres north of the homestead lot to Albert M. Creighton. This consisted of meadow and woodland and bounded eighty rods along the highway. By this deed Tufts reserved the right to maintain the dam on the brook at a height previously agreed upon and the right to take water from the pond and to maintain and renew water pipes for irrigating his adjoining land. This was the site of the Timothy Perkins sawmill, where Tufts had again created a mill pond. Creighton bought the rest of the place on May 5, 1924, and later enlarged the pond as it is today.

This old house, always so filled to overflowing with large families and people of marked vitality, is more noteworthy perhaps for those who have lived in it than for any extraordinary features of its own. The date when it was built is not certainly known. Frank E. Damon, writing in *The Salem Evening News* on June 7, 1928, surmised that it was built by the second Timothy of Andover when he married Phebe Peters in 1744. This has been accepted as a date, but the house has features that appear in much earlier structures. Originally it had a saltbox roof with a lean-to, typical of the early 1700's. This roof was changed probably during the Peabody occupation, and raised to make the building into a regular two-story house with back rooms on the second floor. The center chimney presents another indication of early building: it is based on a rough stone foundation. Mid-century houses in Middleton usually have chimneys supported on brick arches, as in the Tavern, the Capt. Andrew Fuller house, and the Flint homestead.

Many changes have taken place inside the dwelling. The woodwork has been repaired and restored and the large downstairs fireplaces rebuilt. The side door, taken from a church, is a late addition. But fundamentally it is an early eighteenth-century house, and since it was mentioned as the Perkins home in 1720, there seems little doubt that it was built by Timothy, the carpenter, who was living on the land earlier. It probably dates from the birth of his first son in 1715.

The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. James J. Storrow, have very wisely made no drastic changes, and the house still bears the stamp of its early occupants.

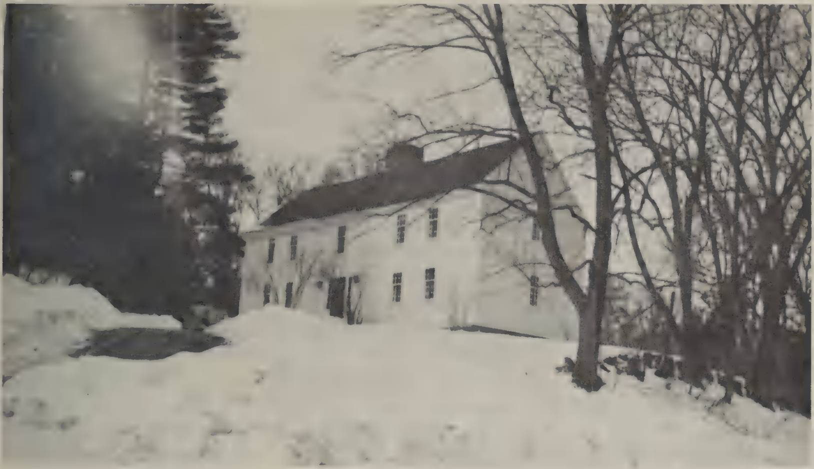
THE OLD STILES HOMESTEAD

At the northern end of Middleton's Essex Street, not far from the Andover line, there stands an old dwelling with the center chimney and peaked roof that bespeak the early eighteenth century. This was the home of the Stiles family for more than two hundred years. Family tradition says that it was built by the second Ebenezer Stiles at the time of his marriage to Sarah How in 1733. Recent work of restoration shows that it was originally built either with only one room on the ground floor and a second part later added at the west, or it was composed of two small houses united to make one larger one. Its woodwork and the west room fireplace appear to be older than 1733.

The first Ebenezer, son of Robert Siles, was born in the Boxford end of Rowley Village in 1669/70. He married Dorothy Dalton at Bradford on July 23, 1701, and appears to have been living on this same farm shortly thereafter. His first purchase of land in the vicinity, which was then part of Andover, but later included in Middleton, was twelve acres of meadow on May 15, 1695 (16-34). The next purchase was made January 3, 1701/2 (16-35). This was thirty acres of upland, swamp, and meadow lying along Beech Brook (now Boston Brook) "near to Samuel Farnum's dwelling and upon Andover highway to Salem" [Essex Street.] It was "fourscore Rodds long and threescore Rodds wide." This is thought to have been the site of Stiles's first house, which is said to have been on the east side of the road. He continued to add to his holdings year by year until he had land as far east as North Liberty Street (47-199), then known as the "old Salem road."

Ebenezer's house is first mentioned in a deed to him from Lawrence Lacy of Andover of nine acres on the west side of the highway, "against the said Ebenezer Stiles Dwelling House." This acreage ran along the road nearly 1000 feet "not damnifying the Way as it is now layd out." It is supposed that "against" means opposite; if so, it is possible that this purchase was the site of the present Stiles house. The deed was dated October 18, 1726.

The Stiles family attended the First Congregational Church in Boxford, and their children, except Ebenezer, Jr., were baptized there. A road or cartway led from their home nearly one mile eastward to the house of Thomas Curtis, where a cellar hole still remains, and then continued east through the forest until it came out on the Andover-Boxford road. Mention is made of this use of the road in a deed from John Martin of Andover to Thomas Curtis, December 21, 1719 (37-133): "all the three parcells of Land through gates or bars for any other persons to pass and



Old Ebenezer Stiles Homestead, Essex Street. Early 1700'S.

repass to their Divisions of Land and for Ebenezer Stiles and his heirs and Successors forever to pass and repass to Boxford meeting house — where he now useth the way."

On November 7, 1732 (67-144), Stiles conveyed to his son Ebenezer for love "15 acres on the west side of the road from Andover to Salem against my other land." According to family history, young Ebenezer is supposed to have built the present house on this land. There is no written record to support the statement, but the story was handed down to David Stiles, Jr., by his grandmother, who was the wife of Ebenezer's son Ezekiel. Whether precisely so or not, it does not explain the presence in the upper hall of mortise holes in the beams for receiving a brace such as would be found on the outer wall of a house of an earlier period, as seen in the Deacon Edward Putnam, Jr., house.

The first Ebenezer Stiles died June 3, 1746. In the settlement of his estate (P.R. 26581) the northerly part of the land with the house under discussion was left to Ebenezer, Jr., and the southerly part went to his brother Daniel, "with the Buildings standing on the southerly part of the homestead aforementioned which belonged to our said father Dec'd and the said Daniel is to have all the personal Estate Belonging to our said Father Stock and all other moveables of Every kind Excep one Cow and two heafers of two years old." The cellar hole of Daniel's house is still plainly visible at some distance southeast of the Stiles house and Boston Brook.

Ebenezer Stiles, Jr., and his wife Sarah enjoyed the homestead throughout their lives. They had five children who lived, Ezekiel being the eldest. As early as 1764 (127-248), Ebenezer had deeded to Ezekiel one half of all his property for the token sum of ten shillings. This included half a piece of land, partly in Middleton and party in Andover, and also twenty-five acres west of the country road, together with "the Westerly end of my Dwelling house Standing thereon Viz: One room from the Cellar to the Garret Inclusively." This gift was confirmed December 3, 1783, when Ebenezer made a similar conveyance to Ezekiel (142-83). This time the son reimbursed his father by the payment of four hundred pounds. For a further payment of £150, he received all the livestock "horses Cattle Sheep and Swine — also all my husbandry materials of Every Nature also an Iron Kettle the grate one a Cloath Loom two Pr of Stilyards and a flax comb." Thus was old age made secure in the eighteenth century.

Upon Ebenezer's death in 1790 the east end of the dwelling house and the indoor movables were left to the widow Sarah, with the customary privileges, and the other sons received suitable bequests.

The will of Ebenezer Stiles was probated April 9, 1790 (P.R. 26582).

Sadly enough, the son Ezekiel passed on before November of that same year at the age of fifty-five, leaving a widow with five boys and a girl, all under sixteen years of age. Mrs. Stiles was the former Miriam Richardson of Marblehead, a woman of strong character and ability. Until her death in 1819 she ran this farm and raised a family worthy of their training. She was greatly admired by her grandson David, the blacksmith, who recorded instances of her courage and persistence in the hard years of her widowhood.

As the five boys all had some claim on the farm, a good many adjustments took place before it finally became the property of Miriam's son David, who was born November 1, 1784. At first David apparently did not want any share in the estate. On March 26, 1808, (192-123), he signed over his right and title both to the real and the personal property and to his mother's thirds to his brothers Simeon, Andrew, and Aaron for $1000. Five years later Aaron gave up his part to Simeon and Andrew (202-187). At the same time the others petitioned the court for a division of the real estate. As a result Phineas and Hannah relinquished their claim to Simeon for $401. The deed (202-187) is worded: "quit-claim — all right in lands and tenements hereafter described viz the westerly part of the dwelling house late of Ezekiel Stiles, dec'd, so far to the Eastward on the center of the chimney together with the cellar under the same. Also the westerly part of the Barn to the floorway and to include two thirds part of the floorway in the main Barn, likewise the cider house and Mill, together with the wash house and hog house, with liberty in common of improving the well of water near the wash house for all necessary purposes, together with the land under said described tenements, likewise two thirds parts of the yard in common about the house, cider hous wash house and hog house. Also two thirds parts of the Barn yard". (etc.). There is further mention of lands on both sides of Andover road. This was signed June 23, 1813. On the same day Phineas and Hannah quit-claimed to Andrew for $401 (202-189) a shoemaker's shop — to keep or sell, one third of a pew in the meeting house, two lots of woodland and pasture, and one-half an acre of orchard on the west side of the road. Likewise on the same day in June Simeon conveyed to Andrew for $401 his right in the shoe shop, and Andrew transferred to him for the same sum the property described in the release from Phineas and Hannah. These variouse exchanges came to an end on November 13, 1813, when Simeon and Andrew sold all their interest in the farm to David for $1500 (202-191). Following Miriam's death in 1819, they also assigned to him their right in their mother's dower.

David Stiles had married Nancy Farnham (Farnum) of Andover on March 12, 1812, and was already the father of a son, David, Jr., born

June 19, 1813. From this time until his death in 1863, David Stiles led a life of piety and sobriety, running the farm competently and raising a family who did him honor. Altogether there were eight children: one died in infancy, and a son, Warren, and a daughter, Lydia, in early youth. The others were Farnham, Hiram, Franklin Osgood and Nancy Emeline.

This was a close-knit family. David, Jr., had his home and blacksmith shop on Maple Street and lived to write a history of the town.[20] Farnham was a shoemaker and in a small way an inventor; he lived on Essex Street near School Street. Emeline, married to Gustavus H. Tufts, also lived on Essex Street in the house now owned by James J. Storrow. Hiram ran the farm with his father.

David Stiles, Sr., was a deacon in the church from 1831 until his death. His son David was made a deacon, too, in his later years. They were devoted members of the Middleton church. Emeline, Farnham, and Hiram, however, turned to spiritualism, and as a result were excommunicated from the Congregational Society. They were a deeply religious family, who did not seem to suffer from the repressions of their day. The old house was often filled with music — the singing of Hiram and his sister and their friends and the instrumental playing of Emeline's sons.

Much could be said about these later descendants of Ebenezer Stiles, because much has been written about them. Caroline Stiles, daughter of David, Jr., later Mrs. Samuel A. Fletcher, kept a diary from 1851 to 1914, and a more detailed journal in the fifties and sixties.[21] Franklin Osgood also kept an interesting journal during his years at Amherst from 1852 to 1856. The life of Franklin Stiles, a manly, intellectual, and ambitious young man, was destined to be a short one. After a year at Phillips Andover, he was determined to acquire a further education. For three years he worked with his brother in the blacksmith shop in order to earn enough to pay expenses at Leicester Academy, near Worcester. Funds were not plentiful in this family, and Frank, practicing the most extreme economies, was the only one with courage to seek a higher education. At Leicester he prepared for Amherst, where he entered in 1852. Already tuberculosis had made its appearance, and his days in college were days of suffering and privation. He succumbed to his affliction soon after graduation. A gentle and honorable soul, probably unequaled by anyone in Middleton for character and attainments, he died in the old homestead on January 14, 1857.

Grandfather Stiles lived to enjoy his fiftieth wedding anniversary. This was marked by a celebration that kept the family busy for days. Caroline records in her diary: "Mar. 12 [1862] — Over 40 met at Grandfathers where everything passed off pleasantly. Grandpa says it seems only about a doz. years instead of 50 since his marriage."

The head of this patriarchal group passed away on August seventh of the next year. The family in the homestead was now reduced to Hiram, his mother, his second wife, Ruth (Russell) Berry, and the four children of his first wife, Emeline Russell, whom he had married in 1841. Hiram Stiles is said to have been a pleasant, amiable man. Aside from his musical interests — he ran a singing school for a time — his life was devoted to the farm and especially to the raising of vegetables for market. He was the first person in Middleton to raise cranberries, for which he was given an award by the Essex County Agricultural Society, and he grew turnips and parsnips in quantity, and strawberries in their season. He also sold wood and coal at a yard in Lynn.

After Hiram died in 1907, and his wife had passed away four years later, the farm remained in the family. In 1923 Hiram's heirs conveyed the property to Sumner B. Stiles. When he deceased in 1938 his childern sold house and land to Albert M. Creighton. Since then several owners have lived in it and made changes necessitated by its partly ruinous state.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Dolan acquired the house in December 1956, and they have undertaken the responsibility of restoring it more nearly to its original condition. The east parlor has been entirely rebuilt. Incorrect windows in the east gable have been replaced in conformity with their original size and position, as revealed by old photographs; the fireplace has been restored and a defective summer beam renewed. With its bare woodwork and plastered walls, it now approximates its early appearance.

The west room was badly treated by a former owner, with a stairway running up from it and a window seat placed under a broad window, but the beauty of its sheathed walls, with some boards measuring as much as thirty-two inches in width, has not been destroyed. The interesting fireplace is also unchanged. It has an oven in one corner that projects into the fireplace over a lintel of rough stone. This was obviously added after the brickwork was first constructed, but it is still a very early feature.

THE COLONEL BENJAMIN PEABODY HOUSE

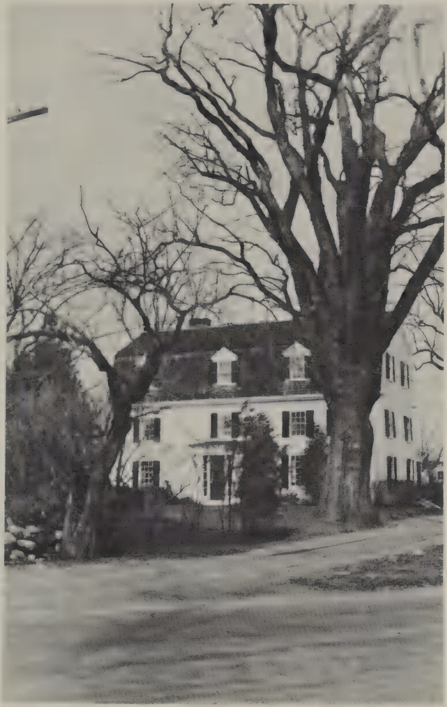
East Street, where two of the Peabody homesteads are still standing, is in the part of Middleton that was originally Topsfield, as was all the land north of Maple Street and east of the river. In the seventeenth century the town of Topsfield allotted to a number of its inhabitants strips of land in this area, all running eastward from the river. Among the grantees was Francis Peabody, miller, who received a considerable acreage which he increased as time went on. When he died he left it to his son Isaac, also of Topsfield, who never lived on it. Isaac augmented these holdings by grant and purchase until he owned from a point south of the Peabody burying ground — the original line — to within a very short distance from the house built by Joseph Towne. This stood on land to the north — the property now owned by the North Shore Community Center of Lynn.

South of the Peabody grant was the land of Deacon Edward Putnam, Sr. Putnam had built a house there at the time of his son Elisha's marriage in 1714. Elisha lived there only ten years. On October 6, 1724, he sold the farm to Isaac Peabody's son, Cornet (Lieut.) Francis, who paid three hundred pounds for it. The deed (44-59) reads as follows:

> a Certain part of my land in Topsfield — where my house and Barn standeth — about 20 acres. Bounded: beginning at a heap of stones lying on the Westerly side of the orchard which is the Northeast Corner Bounds to the Land that the Knights bought of Israel Richards; from thence to run Westwardly upon a straight line to an Elm Tree Marked and standing upon a Ridge; from thence on the same course to the River; and from thence Northerly down by the Riverside till it come to Isaac Peabody's Land; and from thence to run Southeasterly by mr Peabodys Land to a Clump of Ash Trees Marked (Isaac Peabodys bound); thenc Easterly by Isaac Peabody to a stake and heap of stones from thence to run Southerly or Southwesterly on a straight Line to another stake and heap of stones lying on the Northwesterly side of my upper Orchard; from thence on a straight line to another stake and heap of stones on the Southwardly side of the stone wall; and from thence to run Southwestwardly across the gutter to a stake and heap of stones to a straight Line; and from thence northerly by Knights Land to first bound.
>
> Aforesaid 20 acres with the house and Barn Orcharding fences wood and timber.

Cornet Francis Peabody and his wife, the former Dorothy Perkins of Topsfield, whom he had married January 27, 1714/15, lived in this homestead throughout their lifetime, and thirteen children were born to them there. Not all of them lived. The first born was named after his father and is called Deacon Francis to distinguish him from Cornet Francis. He came into the world on September 21, 1715, married Margaret Knight March 26, 1739, and soon afterwards purchased a house built by Daniel Towne on the grant to the north.

Benjamin Peabody, Francis's first child, was born in the Towne house August 9, 1741, and probably lived there until his marriage. That event



The East Street homestead of Col. Benjamin Peabody. Built by Edward Putnam for his son Elisha in 1714.
Owned by the Peabody's from 1724 to 1841.

took place September 23, 1765, when he wedded Hannah Black. Just when he moved into his grandfather's house, which he later purchased, is uncertain. There is no record that he acquired a house of his own during his early married life. The probability is that he was running his grandfather's farm and living with him when Cornet Francis died in 1769. Three of Benjamin's children had been born before that time. It seems unlikely that Deacon Francis, whose house was swarming with nearly a dozen children many years younger than his oldest son, could have accommodated Benjamin's growing family. Benjamin eventually bought from his father the Cornet Peabody house with twenty-seven acres of land, but not until April 27, 1780.

In the period between 1775 and 1780, when Benjamin was a captain, he was paying real estate taxes on the east side of town and was taking part in public affairs. In June 1779 he was on a "Commety" to provide men who were called for by the "Jenneral Cort." This committee was empowered to raise money for the soldiers by a tax upon the inhabitants in the ensuing year. Peabody spent the summer of 1780 from July to October at West Point. His orderly book, kept during that time, has been preserved by the Danvers Historical Society and published in their *Historical Collections*.[22] The document concludes, "Left West Point Oct 10 1780 — Arrived at home 15 October 1780."

Peabody came back to the farm he had bought from his father in the spring and to which he was to retire as a colonel. In 1780 it was described as "A Certain Tract of Land Scituated in said Middleton on the east side of the Ipswich River, so called, containing Twenty Seven Acres with a house & a Barn on the same." At the southwest corner by the river the land bounded on Jonathan Knight; thence ran east to the road; thence northwardly by the road to land of Isaac Kenney; and north by his land, but west of the Peabody burial lot, to a wall bounding the former William Peabody property; then westwardly by the wall and so to the river and as far down river as would make up twenty-seven acres.

This house is still an impressive building, but so changed from its appearance in the eighteenth century as to be unrecognizable. Originally it was a center-chimney structure of two stories with a pitched roof. In 1798, according to the state census, it had only seven windows with forty-five square feet of glass in them. Each window must have been little more than two by three feet and must have been the same provided for the house when it was built in 1714. The house covered an area of 800 square feet, which might have comprised two main rooms on the ground floor, with perhaps an ell or leanto. There was a sizeable barn fifty-one feet long and thirty-four wide and a small shoe shop twelve by ten. At that time the entire farm comprised sixty-six acres, with house and land appraised at $1489.

At some later time the house was raised another story and finished with a gambrel roof. No one seems to know just when this metamorphosis took place, nor when the great central chimney and its fireplaces were removed to make way for two separate chimneys in the north walls of the main rooms. This may have occurred in the 1920's during the ownership of Charles Jopp, who, although he was a collector of old furniture, modernized the woodwork and fireplaces to such an extent that it is now difficult to see any evidence of the early features. The stone base of the old chimney may still be seen in the cellar, although a passageway has been cut through it. As in many other houses so changed the removal of the brickwork of the old chimney has left an inner room without windows. Until recently this was utilized as a butler's pantry. The east room seems to have an additional inner wall with resultant wide window sills that would not have been a feature of the original house. Benjamin Peabody might have some difficulty in recognizing his home were he to return today. In spite of change the place is enhanced by a naturally beautiful setting with one of the ancient elms still standing in all its glory in front of the dwelling.

The history of every old house is inevitably entwined with the story of its occupants. Benjamin Peabody in a detailed day book and business account left us a complete record of his doings from 1785 to 1810.[23] It reveals him as a fascinating personality with abilities in many directions. He was no mere farmer, although he ran a farm, and, while he was a thorough craftsman, he was not confined to hand labor, but was conducting business in many directions. It is literally true that he performed the functions of a carpenter, mason, blacksmith, shoemaker, veterinarian, and butcher, while acting as town clerk and tax collector, and as selectman for many years, and still spending much time writing wills, appraising and settling estates, conducting vendues, and making frequent journeys to court at Andover, Ipswich, or Cambridge on matters of legal business.

One of Peabody's particular capacities was taking care of the grist mill of Dr. Silas Meriam, who had married Benjamin's sister Lydia. When the mill was in operation he always did the work of "picking", or sharpening, the millstones every few weeks, and of doing such jobs as repairing the wasteway or flume, putting a box in the mill, or installing necessary ironwork. A cider mill on his own premises occupied much of Peabody's attention. This was a real business in itself, where barrels and barrels of cider were pressed out for everyone in town and where some people were allowed to make their own cider by paying for the privilege — with "straw provided" if necessary.

Another particular function of this ever-busy citizen was that of sex-ton: over and over he mentions making coffins for his neighbors and their children. In fact, carpentry of all kinds was perhaps his greatest skill. We find him constructing a blacksmith's shop for Eleazer Brown, framing and silling a barn, putting up the staging for work on the meeting house, and even building a schoolhouse from start to finish. The latter structure was begun in March 1792, when he spent half a day cutting timber and one day hewing it. He framed and raised the building in one day, then furnished shingles and nails. He must have worked on the project as occasion allowed, a few days in August and a period in September, when he charged for five days work and three pints of New England rum. In October he whitewashed the building as the final job.

These various activities did not interfere with getting the most out of the farm. Benjamin mentions selling hay and wood, onions, apples, potatoes, rye and Indian meal, as well as geese, turkeys, and veal. He rented his horses and oxen to others or did jobs of hauling boards, wood, hay, and turf.

In deeds Benjamin Peabody was called "gentleman," but the record of his doings does not suggest the usual meaning of gentleman as a person who did not work with his hands. He was a gentleman because he was an independent farmer, highly regarded as one who gave himself to the affairs of his town and his church.

Col. Peabody had twelve children in all, four of whom were boys. Unfortunately, all his sons died in childhood. Seven of the girls married young and left the family homestead. Peggy's wedding, when she became the wife of James Wilkins, on October 10, 1810, was the last to take place. There is a possibility that the young couple remained in the home as company for her parents. Mrs. Peabody died in 1821; the colonel passed away September 10, 1829, at the age of eighty-eight, and was buried in the family cemetery. His gravestone is suitably inscribed:

DEA. BENJAMIN PEABODY
He was an officer in the American Revolution.
He was a deacon in the Church of Christ in Middleton 27 years.
An amiable temper, good sense, and unaffected piety
adorned his character and made him extensively
useful and greatly beloved.

By this time Peggy had given birth to eight children. Three of them died in babyhood and her husband also passed away in 1827 at the age of thirty-four. She was then left with four little girls and a boy of seventeen. This explains why Benjamin Peabody made a will that left his entire estate to Peggy Wilkins. Thus provided for she lived in the house until her death in 1840. Nursed by her daughter Caroline during a period of illness, she expired on December thirty-first, while her barn was burning down. Peggy left a will dividing such possessions as she had among her children, but there were accumulated debts that could be satisfied only by selling the farm.

The next owner of the Peabody homestead was Samuel Peabody. He bought the place at a vendue held on April 1, 1841 (324-182), and kept it a few years. In 1852 it was owned by John M. Ives of Salem and conveyed by him to Jeremiah Fowler (548-144). Fowler sold the property with seventy acres of land September 2, 1853, to Jonathan Reed of Chelmsford (484-126). In 1856 Reed conveyed it to Joseph and Andrew P. Averill with twenty-five acres, and they in turn, on April 1, 1857, transferred it to Joseph Berry Perkins of Middleton (553-219).

The Perkins family now became the first settled occupants after the death of Peggy Wilkins. They owned and lived in the old house until March 10, 1883, when Perkins's daughter Ann, wife of Oren Peabody, sold it with thirty-five acres to Mary A. W. Witham (Mrs. Frank A. Witham) for $600 (1110-122). The Withams made the place their home until 1904, when the estate was sold to Mrs. John Osborn of Lynn (1730-130). Twenty years later it became the property of Charles B. Jopp (2853-199). Since then it has passed through several hands. It is presently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Forney.

THE PEABODY-WILKINS MANSION

The Peabody-Wilkins house on East Street may well be termed the most distinguished dwelling in Middleton. Carefully adapted for modern living by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph H. Illingworth, it displays a great many early features still intact, even though no attempt has been made to return it to its original condition. Set on a commanding slope west of the street, it presents a beautiful appearance to the passer-by.

This house stood on land originally laid out to Joseph Towne of Topsfield. It was one of a number of long narrow strips running westward to Ipswich River. It is supposed that Towne built a house on this land in the early eighteenth century. He died before 1715, leaving a family of six children, of whom Benjamin was the eldest.

In 1719 Benjamin and his younger brother Daniel made an agreement with Isaac Peabody, who owned the land south of them, concerning their dividing line. In this document it is stated that the line ran "within about Eight Rods & Six feet of the Corner of the Dwelling house the said

The Peabody-Wilkins House on East Street built by Daniel Towne before 1740, when it was conveyed to Francis Peabody. Sold to David Wilkins in 1833 and owned by his descendants for more than 100 years.

Towns now Live in." There is a grave question as to whether the house mentioned was the mansion later owned by Francis Peabody. It is stated as a fact by some earlier investigators that Benjamin and Daniel Towne built it before 1719. However, neither of these young men was then married, and it seems unlikely that they would have been building such a pretentious house two or three years in advance of setting up housekeeping. It is almost certain that the house standing in 1719 was their father's homestead.

Daniel Towne did build the house still standing at some time before September 17, 1740, when he sold it with forty-five acres to Francis Peabody, Jr., for £680. Meantime Cornet Francis Peabody on April first of that same year had sold to his son for £500 a twenty-five acre strip bordering south on his own land with a dwelling house on it. The land boundaries of this sale suggest that it was the original Towne house. There is no further record of it, and it is probable that Francis, Jr., tore it down or utilized it in some other way after he acquired the mansion.

Judging by the evidence of Peabody's new house, it must have been enlarged and improved by its owner within a few years of its purchase. As originally built it must have had the classic two rooms on a floor arrangement of most of Middleton's early houses. As the family grew, and it did grow apace, for Francis Peabody had twelve children, a saltbox leanto was added on the north side. This ended on the east with a Beverly jog. The very fine woodwork in the house, judging by its style, may have been installed not long atfer Peabody acquired the place. A description of its present appearance may be in order.

Entering by the front door, one immediately notes the stairway with winding steps going up from left to right. The center chimney wall back of it is covered with feather-edged pine sheathing that is probably original. The stair rail and posts are of a late type. To the right the east room presents a handsome appearance, with paneling over the fireplace edged by delicately fluted pilasters. To the right of it a cupboard door is let into the wall. The beams, which at first no doubt were exposed, are now boxed with corner beading.

The west room is noteworthy for a cavernous fireplace with an oven in the back wall. This must have been the "keeping" room or living room in the original house.

When the leanto was built, provision was made for a third fireplace opening into the central chimney. This is a generous affair some eight feet, four inches long and about five feet high. This fireplace also has an oven in the rear wall. We may assume that after it was built all the cooking was done in the leanto.

Upstairs the west chamber shows more evidence of early construction than do the other rooms. This room is sheathed and has gunstock corner posts, which, however, were boxed in at some later time. The woodwork is severely plain, with two simple cupboard doors opening at either side of a board above the fireplace opening. This arrangement of cupboards over the hearth appears in three of the four main rooms. In the east chamber it is more elaborate. Narrow horizontal panels ornament the wall above the fireplace, and over them is a central panel with paneled cupboard door at each side.

In the basement the usual massive stonework supporting the center chimney gives evidence of the early period of the house. The attic has a curious little steep stairway leading up to a skylight. It is based on a kneehigh box-like section.

In 1740, when Peabody bought the house, he was only twenty-five years old — he was born September 21, 1715 — and had been married a little over a year. His wife was Margaret Knight, daughter of Benjamin Knight, a neighbor. Her first child, named Benjamin after her father, was born in the house in 1741. A man of note in Middleton, he became a colonel in the Revolution, and upon his return from service acquired the home of his grandfather, Cornet Francis.[24]

Deacon Peabody is perhaps remembered today not so much for his own accomplishments as for the fact that he was the father of the ambitious Joseph Peabody, who became Salem's richest shipowner. When Joseph was a boy of eight, he was sent to live with his sister Ruth, wife of John Curtis, in nearby Boxford. There he was kept at farm work for ten years without any schooling or outside diversions, and without remuneration except what he could make for himself by keeping a few hens.

Because of these privations, he became obsessed with a dream of making a fortune. After the Revolution, at the age of nineteen, he set out for Salem, carrying a shoemaking kit that he had used for occasional cobbling. Once in the seaport, he did not make shoes, but signed on as a sailor on a privateer owned by Elias Hasket Derby. However, the life of an ordinary seaman was not part of his dream, which he realized he could not attain without further education. Accordingly, he came back to Middleton and put himself in the hands of the Rev. Elias Smith, who not only took him on as a pupil, but, more important, made him one of his household, where Joseph lived for more than a year. For the first time he received what he had never had — a happy home life. Joseph married Smith's daughter Katharine, and, following her death two years later, he espoused her sister Elizabeth. Eventually his ships sailed the seven seas and he became a multimillionaire.

Deacon Francis, unlike his father, who was chosen selectman year after year in Middleton from the beginning of the town in 1730, besides holding the office of town clerk, devoted himself wholly to his farm and his family. His property was a perfect example of the subsistence farm of the 1700's — an almost completely independent organization. Everything was done, everything made, and everything supplied on its 187 acres. When the deacon died in 1797, the fine house was surrounded by outbuildings. There was a huge barn, seventy-seven feet long and twenty-eight in width, there was a blacksmith shop, twenty-four by twenty-four, and a cider mill. Shoemaking was done at home, as was flax raising and weaving. A flock of sheep supplied wool for cloth. In the state census for taxation purposes made in 1798 the property was valued at $3529. By modern standards this does not seem like a large figure, but at that time only one estate in Middleton was worth more.

Family tradition says that Francis Peabody did not have very much money to leave his heirs. This is not strange. The value of his property lay in his land and buildings and in the equipment for complete use of them that he made with his own hands. It is virtually certain that the great number of tools for blacksmithing, coopering, and carpentry — even ropemaking — owned later by his son Francis, was fashioned over the years by this most ingenious man and his sons, who were trained in all these crafts. Benjamin Peabody certainly was, and the next owner of the estate was equally industrious. Slave labor probably added to the output. Peabody is known to have been a slaveholder, for he purchased Nancy, the colored servant of Rev. Elias Smith, after the minister had given her in marriage to another slave. She later gave birth to a child at the Peabody farm.[25]

Upon the death of the deacon in 1797, the estate descended to his son Francis, a second son Andrew having died in his youth. Born March 4, 1745, the younger Francis, who had married Sarah Cummings on August 16, 1774, continued to manage the farm until he, too, passed away in 1817. His will and the very extensive inventory of his belongings (P.R. 20827) gives us a glimpse of the way of life of a successful farmer and craftsman in the early 1800's. He left an estate of 147 acres with the buildings, which then included a barn and shed, a blacksmith shop, a new cider house and shop, and the old cider house, altogether worth $7350, and personal property valued at $3033.67. His wife Sarah was given one-third of the real estate and three lots of land in Andover, plus the privilege of a pew in the meeting house, while Stephen and Samuel, their sons, were to have the remainder. Samuel was still a minor, so the house was divided between Stephen and his mother, she to have the westerly part and almost entire ownership of the farm buildings and activities. Sarah was also given the use of the clock, which eventually was to go to

Stephen, while Samuel was to have his father's watch immediately.

In 1815 Francis Peabody had started a sawmill for Stephen on Mill Street just above the old ironworks dam. Two weeks before his death in January 1817 he conveyed this mill to his son for $600. Stephen ran it successfully for some twenty-five years, and then sold it to his son Francis 3rd. It later became the property of Samuel Symonds.

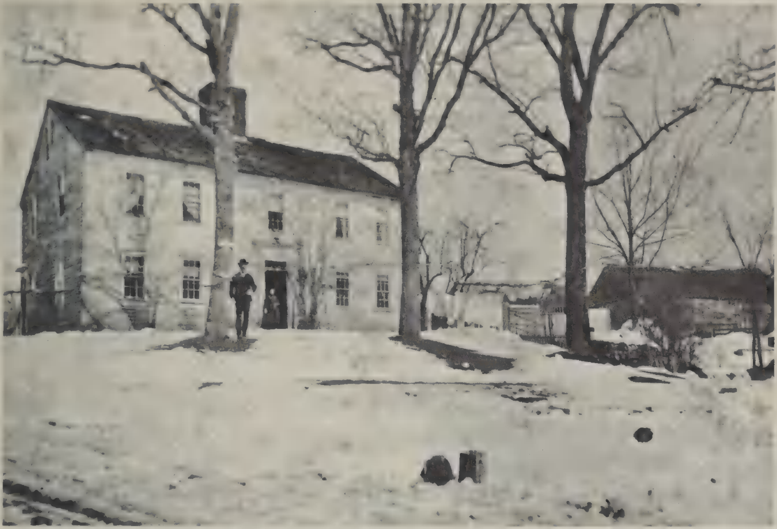
Sarah Peabody died October 6, 1817, at the age of fifty-eight, leaving to Stephen all her possessions, except a legacy to her grandchildren, the children of her deceased daughter Betty and Peter Cross. Samuel was not yet eighteen and for the next three years was under the guardianship of Samuel Nichols. During his minority the big house was rented. In 1820 Stephen bought a piece of land near the sawmill, where he put up a house that he still owned in 1844. This became his permanent home after he conveyed his father's farm to David S. Wilkins. Samuel went to New York after he became of age, and Stephen seems to have been the sole owner of the Peabody estate when Wilkins acquired it. It was sold for $2650 on March 18, 1833, and then included ninety-six acres of land with buildings on both sides of the country road.

On the day following this transaction, David S. Wilkins conveyed one-fourth of the property to his son George Putnam Wilkins, who ran the farm after the death of his father in 1841. George P. Wilkins had two sons, Lyman Smith and George Payson, who grew up on the farm and worked it in more recent times. The name of Lyman ("Lyme") is most closely associated with the house, as he is well remembered by the townspeople; he was living there in 1943 at the age of ninety-one. After his death it became the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph H. Illingsworth. In 1965 it was sold with eighty-six acres of land to the North Shore Community Center of Lynn.

THE FLINT HOMESTEAD

The Flint homestead has the distinction of being the only old house in Middleton that is still occupied by a descendant of the family who built it. Until the recent death of Bertha Flint Woodward, she and her husband, Harry R. Woodward, her daughter Carol E., and at times other members of the family have lived in it. Miss Woodward, who, of couse, is a lineal descendant of the first owner, John Flint, now resides there with her father.

Family tradition says the house was erected in 1746 when John married Huldah Putnam, the daughter of Jethro and Anna Putnam of Danvers. Although there is no record to show who actually built the house, we may assume that it was not John himself, since he was only twenty-one at



Home of the Flint family from 1746 to the present time. Probably built by Samuel Flint for his son, John. From a photograph taken about 1860. Note barn.

the time. The land belonged to his father, Samuel Flint, and it is probable that he was the builder, perhaps with the aid of his son.

Samuel Flint came of a line that was particularly gifted in the mechanical arts. His father, Capt. Thomas Flint, was a millwright and had been a moving spirit in the construction of the Middleton ironworks and in the early mill known as "Fullers and flints saw mill." on Boston Brook. Thomas Flint lived in West Peabody in a neighborhood known as Phelps's Corner. When he died in 1721, he left two houses there and mills on the Ipswich River where the United Shoe Machinery plant stands today. His son Thomas was given the home where he was then living and Samuel the family homestead; the mills were also devised to the sons. Thomas made use of this inheritance, but Samuel, who became a tailor, did not. He must soon have moved to Middleton to his land north of the river. He was on the list of Middleton residents taxed for the minister in 1729 and he appears in various connections in Middleton up to the time of his death in 1769. Martha J. Averill in her *Genealogical Note Books* expressed the belief that he lived on Boston Street opposite the Flint cemetery and a little west of it in a house later owned by Joseph Jeffreys. This house burned within a few years after Samuel Flint's death. The place was but a stone's throw from his son's home.

The young man who started his career so auspiciously led a full and active life, not only as a farmer and mill owner, but also as an influential citizen of the town. He raised a family of four — two sons, Jeremiah and John, and two daughters, Ruth and Anna. Known in later years as Deacon John, he lived until 1780. His will, drawn seven years before his death, is one of the more interesting documents of its kind and throws considerable light on how this family lived. John Flint cannot be considered a typical Middleton farmer of the period, for he was blessed with more wordly goods than were most of them. His ownership of six slaves places him in a category of expansive living somewhat beyond that of his fellow townsmen. The will indicates that he was a man of careful forethought, accustomed to anticipating circumstances. The detailed provisions made for his wife are indicative of their way of living. The document as here reproduced omits the formalities of introduction and ending.

Imprimus. I give and bequeath to my beloved wife Huldah my Servant Woman named Pegg, two good Cows, my Pannel and Pillion and all my indoor moveables, escept my own wearing Apparel to be at her own disposal. I likewise give to her the Improvement of the half of my buildings, Corn and saw Mills with the one half of all my Lands of all sorts in this Town or elsewhere, with the Improvement of one half of the stock untill, my son John hereafter mentioned shall come to the age of twenty-one Years. After which Time I give her the Improvement of the Eastwardly Part of my Dwelling House on the front viz. the Garret, the Chamber under it, the lower Room and the Cellar under that with a smaller milk Cellar at the North part of the Arch with a Privilege in the kitchen, viz. a little Bed Room at the East End of it and Liberty to improve the kitchen for washing, Baking, passing and repassing to and from the Well, Garden, etc. as she shall have Occasion; also the Easternmost Part of my Garden beginning at a large Rock by the stile and running inward to a cherry tree on the bank of the Ditch, from thence along by the ditch to the board fence, and from thence as the fence stands to the Bounds first mentioned; also yearly to have twelve Bushels of Indian meal and eight of Rye Meal, with two hundred weight of Pork, and 100 weight of Beef and one Bushel of Salt; also four Barrels of Cyder put into the Cellar, two Gallons of West India Rum and two Gallons of New England Rum, ten Gallons of Molasses, two Bushels of winter Apples, four Bushels of Potatoes, one Bushel of Turnips, three quarters of a Hundred of brown Sugar, ten pounds of Coffee, fourteen pounds of Rice, one peck of wheite Beans with full Liberty to pick green Beans or Corn in the season of it or Apples as she shall need for herself, also twelve pounds of sheeps Wool in the Fleece, and twenty pounds of flax from the swingle, also as much fire Wood as she shall need brought and cut at the door, also her two Cows kept for the winter and Summer, also a Horse for her to ride on to and from Meeting, and at other Times when she shall need, also the Enjoyment of her Seat in the front of my Pew in the Meeting House, also the Improvement of Right in the social Library in Middleton, these Priviledges to be enjoyed by my wife Huldah aforesaid so long as she continues my widow and to be found for her yearly by my two sons Jeremiah and John equally.

Item — I give to my son Jeremiah the one half of my Buildings saw and Corn Mills and all my Lands and Wood whether in this Town or elsewhere that are not otherwise disposed of, also one half of my Stock and outdoor Moveables, also one half of my wearing Apparel and my Servants Primus and Jack at his Disposal, also my Right in the social Library in Middleton after my wife has done with it, also the one half of my Pew in the Meeting House.

Item — I give to my Daughter Ruth in Addition to what she has already had my Servant Girl Kate with eight Pounds of lawful Money to be paid her in five Years after my Decease by my two sons equally.

Item — I give to my Daughter Anna eighty Pounds lawful Money to be paid her by my two sons Jeremiah and John when she is published in Order for marriage or if she is not Published before, when my son John shall be twenty one Years of age and eight Pounds to be paid by them to her [torn] years after, also my servant Girl Chloe at her own disposal.

Item — I give to my son John the one half of my Buildings saw and Corn Mills, the one half of my Lands whether in this Town or elsewhere and the Wood thereon that are not otherwise disposed of, also one half of my Stock and outdoor Moveables, also one half of my wearing Apparel, and the one half of my Pue in the Meeting House, also my Servant Boy Worster at his disposal, when this my son shall be twenty one Years of Age.

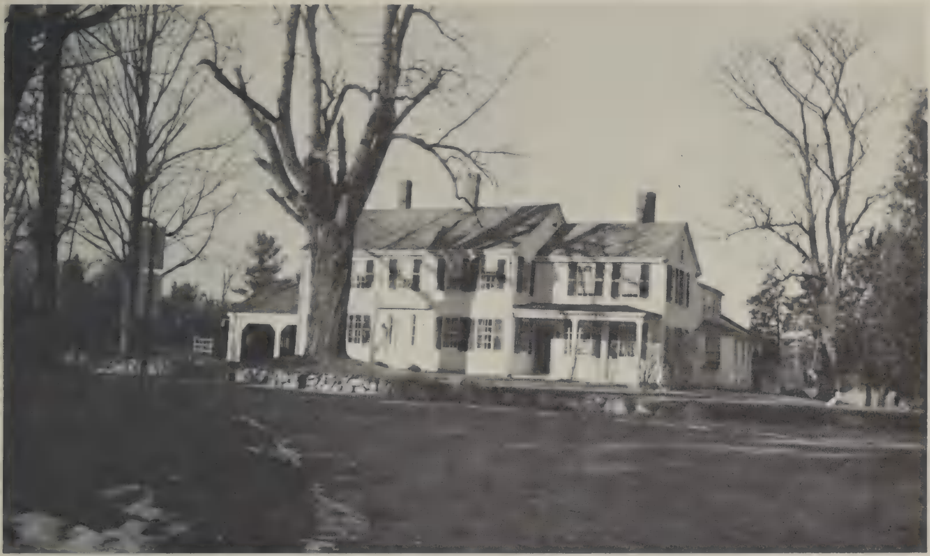
The mention of the "milk Cellar at the North part of the Arch" refers to a peculiar feature of the old house that has since disappeared. Like other Middleton dwellings of the middle of the century the Flint house was built on a center-chimney plan, with the chimney stack supported on a brick arch. It has a fine large cellar running under the whole house. A short distance northeast of the west end of the arch a small sub-cellar, built entirely of brick and reached by steps, provided a milkroom for the cooling of dairy products. In more recent times this little cellar was unused. During heavy rains water collected in it, and the Woodwards had it filled in.

Although the Flint house was built in a simple manner, its living room on the west end and dining room on the east show good original paneling around the fireplaces. The west room fireplace has a brick oven in its back wall, which was occasionally used by Mrs. Woodward for baking beans in the old-fashioned way. The large kitchen fireplace was changed by Mrs. Woodward's grandfather, Sylvanus Flint, in order to provide a convenient woodbox in the days when a stove was in use. He also tore down the upstairs fireplaces to make way for closets.

The dining room once had a paneled cupboard in the corner. This is not now in place, but still stands in a small ell room where it has been for many years.

Sheathing of very wide boards appears at a number of places in the house — notably as enclosure for a back stairway leading up from the west entry. It was also used for a partition in a north bedroom.

The outbuildings are of considerable interest. As mentioned in the chapter on mills, the little shop on the other side of Boston Street (recently demolished) was in existence in 1780, perhaps as an office for the saw mill. Later it was used as a shoe shop and in the eighties as a school room. Sylvanus Flint's diary notes putting up a stove in the shop, while other members of the family papered it, repaired chairs and put up benches. On November 20, 1882, Fannie Flint "commenced school at



Home of Lieut. John Flint on Elm Street 1782. Birthplace of Charles L. Flint.

the old shop."

Another relic of early days on the farm is the "lilac house" just outside the east ell. In spite of its fancy name, this is merely an ancient four-holer outhouse or "necessary" masked by a thick growth of lilac bushes.

The mills were in full swing at the time of Deacon John's death, and his sons continued to run them. They divided the mill property in 1781, giving each other reciprocal deeds.[26] The sawmill then stood across the street from the homestead and was powered by a stream, now diverted, that ran down under the mill into the Ipswich River. The grist mill stood below on the river bank.

The business prospered until the untimely death of Lieut. John, as he was called, on December 6, 1802. After his father's death John had married Betty Fuller, daughter of Capt. Andrew Fuller, and had built himself a fine house, still standing on what is now Elm Street, where a turn in the road from Middleton leads to North Reading.

Jeremiah's problems now became acute. John had left eight children, all but one of them girls, and Jeremiah had nine children of his own. For a number of years he tried to carry on the farm and the mills, and to contribute to the support of his brother's widow and young family. It must have been a losing battle. After he died in 1818 his entire property had to be sold at auction. Fortunately his house and other buildings and his share in the sawmill were purchased by Joseph Peabody, 2d., the husband of his daughter Anna. It was later (1827) conveyed by a family agreement to Jeremiah's son John, and in consequence remained in the Flint family. John did not run the mills; on February 25, 1832 (264-59) he conveyed them with five acres of land to Francis Peabody of Salem, who established a paper mill in their place.

John's son Sylvanus, the grandfather of Bertha Flint Woodward, lived in the house throughout his lifetime. He was a very capable man, a brickmason by trade. He also kept up the farm and at times worked in the paper mill nearby. His diary, kept from 1867 until his death in 1901, is the best record of Middleton life, especially as related to farming, that has been preserved to us. It is also the best record of the construction of houses in that period. Sylvanus Flint's wife Miranda died on November 27, 1867, but the bereaved man, with the help of his sisters Abbie and Sarah, continued to make a home for his boy Nelson and his little girls Addie and Fannie.

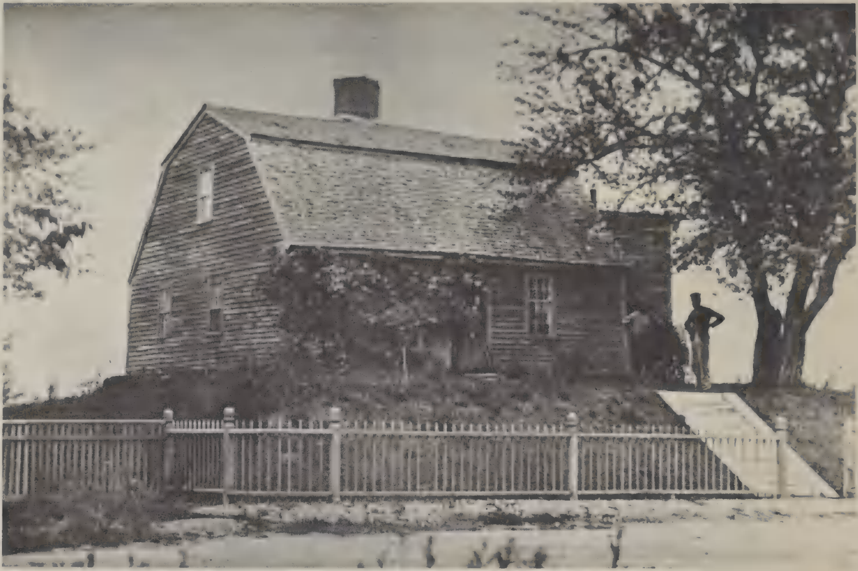
In 1893 Fannie Flint was given an appointment as postmistress for South Middleton. At about this time a small building intended for use as a store was erected near the northwest corner of the house. Store and postoffice combined very well and Sylvanus and his daughter shared its duties in his later years. In 1895 Miss Flint had a room over the store fitted up as a meeting place. She made a trip to Boston one day and bought four dozen chairs for the purpose, and the room was soon in demand for various gatherings. Every Sunday afternoon one of the Middleton ministers came to preach there to the Flints' neighbors and friends, the Congregational minister one Sunday and the Methodist minister the next. On many an evening too the sound of music would be heard, either in an instrumental concert or an entertainment of singing and readings. When Mr. and Mrs. Woodward came to live in the house the little store was converted into a garage and connected to the main house by a breezeway. The hall, however, was left as before and has been in use for local gatherings ever since.

Bertha Woodward was the daughter of Nelson F. Flint, who succeeded to the ownership of the farm after the death of his father. Eventually it became the property of Mrs. Woodward, who, even when her grandfather was alive, had spent summers there. In 1936 the Woodwards made it their permanent home.

THE BRADSTREET HOUSE

Thomas Bayley was one of the first settlers of the part of Middleton that was Salem Village before 1728. He was rated there in 1681 and in 1686 he was a witness to the will of John Gingell, whose sister Elizabeth he had married. Another sister, Hannah Gingell, was the wife of Bray Wilkins. Bayley is first mentioned in the land records November 24, 1701, when, with Henry, Benjamin, and John Wilkins, he joined in purchasing for £125 the farm on which he was then living. (15-239). The land had previously belonged to William Ireland, now of Rumney Marsh, and was sold by him and Elizabeth Ireland of Boston, widow of his son William, together with her son John. The estate is described as "a Certain messuage or Tenement consisting of Arable Land pasture land meadow Land and woodland — at Will's Hill — Now in the Tenure & occupation of the said Thomas Bayley the homestead Being Bounded by the Fullers Land on the south & William Ways Land Easterly and the Land of John Easty Westerly & Northerly by the Brook comonly called Pout Pond Brook & several other Tracts both of upland and meadow within the bounds of the great farm formerly belonging to Governor Bellingham being by estimation one hundred and fifty acres — with all houses Edifices Buildings Barns orchards garden Lands Meadows pastures feedings Commons profitts & commodities whatsoever together with all fencing fruit Trees timber tress wood & underwood standing [etc.] on any part of same — with all wayes easements [etc.] to the said Tenement."

This dwelling occupied by Thomas Bayley stood on the exact spot



The Abigail Bradstreet House. Owned in the 1750'S by Rev. Andrew Peters. The diagonal chimney is unique. From an early photograph.

where the gambrel-roofed house now owned by Chester K. Masse is located on Maple Street near the corner of Washington Street. In a deed to John Fuller, May 17, 1710 (28-89), Bayley is called a "roapmaker." Whatever his occupation, he seems to have been a poor man. He had eight children, three sons and five daughters, the oldest born in 1682.[27]

On February 12, 1711/12 (27-28), Thomas Bayley gave his son Nicholas "halfe my homestead both for Quality and Quantity and the new Dwelling house that stands upon it." Nicholas and his heirs were to have the other half after the decease of Thomas and his wife, and Rebecca, the wife of Nicholas, was to be given her thirds if she should outlive her husband. Thomas reserved ten acres for himself, in case he might be forced by illness or poverty to sell it. Otherwise all was to go to Nicholas, who was to "pay some reasonable legacies to his sisters."

In a deed dated March 31, 1714 (4-133), Bayley provided for his other son Thomas as well. "In consideration of love good will and natural affection" he gave him eighty acres of land lying in Salem near the Boxford line. This deed may have been prompted by the fact that Thomas Bayley was dying. Strangely enough, Nicholas, too, was at death's door. According to the diary of Rev. Joseph Green, pastor of the Salem Village church,[28] "Nick Bayly dyed" May 16, 1714, and Thomas Bayley the following day.

The house then became the property of Elizabeth, widow of Thomas, and Rebecca (Knight), widow of Nicholas. Since this "new house", or at least a part of it, may actually be the one later known as the Bradstreet house, these records have a special interest. The whole farm, with house, barn, and orchard, then contained thirty-five acres and was valued at eighty pounds. There was very little in the house in the way of furniture and, such as it was, it too was coming to an end: old chairs, old pewter, old chest, old cupboard — even "an old Hors worse than nothing 20 years old.'

For some years the "old widow" and the "young widow" continued to to live in the Bayley house. Land and house were divided for their convenience. Elizabeth was given the east end of the leanto and the north side of the barn. Let it here be noted that a three-acre piece of land on the south side of the road took its bound mark from the doorpost of the dwelling, and so southerly.

We next hear of the Bayleys in 1736. The youngest son, Benjamin, who at the time of his father's death was in his early teens, had reached his majority and married one Mary —, probably in 1723. Before 1736 he had had seven children and later he had three more. As Nicholas's widow had left the house in 1723 to marry David Richardson, it is probable that Benjamin's entire family was born in the Bayley house. By a deed dated September 21, 1736 (83-185), the heirs of Nicholas — his daughter Elizabeth and her husband, David Wilkins, Jr., his daughter Rebecca, and their mother with David Richardson — quit-claimed to Benjamin "all right in parcel of upland and meadow land and swamp and buildings in Middleton, which the said Bejamin Bayley now is in the possession of." This parcel was then bounded southerly by Lieut. Thomas Fuller and Timothy Fuller; easterly by William Fuller, John Fuller, and Rev. Andrew Peters; southerly[29] meadow and swamp of Jonathan Estey, Henry Wilkins, Jr., and Solomon Wilkins; westerly Jonathan Estey and Isaac Wilkins.

On March 13, 1741, Benjamin Bayley conveyed to Timothy Fuller for eighty pounds his three acres south of the highway. In that year, too, we hear of him as pound keeper. In 1743 and 1744 he was paid by the town for taking care of the meetinghouse. He paid his taxes — for the last time — in 1746. Thereafter Benjamin Bayley and his entire family, except Benjamin, Jr., who lived in Middleton until after his marriage, disappeared from the records as completely as if they had perished in some catastrophe. Nor is there any record of the house, although there are indications that it may have remained unoccupied and have fallen into disrepair.

The story of this property must now be approached from another angle, which still does not fully clarify the age of the present house. Rev. Andrew Peters was Middleton's first minister. In 1729, the year of his arrival in town, he bought twenty-seven acres and a house of Dr. Daniel Felch. He is said to have torn this house down at a later time and to have built a new one back of the meetinghouse. In 1745 he purchased thirty acres more in the area near Pout Pond, and on December 28, 1749 (94-299), he added to his farm another ten acres that included the Neck meadow and Bailey's swamp. This latter purchase apparently included the Bayley house site, although the deed does not refer to a house. Nevertheless, when Andrew Peters died in 1756, he was the owner of two houses, and the settlement of his estate proves that one of them was on the exact location of the Bayley house. It is variously mentioned in the probate records as "Building,", "a dwelling", and "a small dwelling house."

Peters's estate was divided between Hannah, his widow, his four brothers, his mother, and the heirs of a sister. The land allotted to them lay along the road from Bradford's Tavern (now Middleton Square) to the meeting house, following the course of the present King Street. Four narrow lots were laid out along the northerly side of this road, each containing about twenty-three acres and having a frontage of only one hundred to one hundred and sixty feet or so, while they ran north to Pout

Pond meadow more than a half a mile. The first lot, No. 1, awarded to William Peters, began at the eastern boundary of Jonathan Estey's land; the lot east of it, No. 2, went to Bimsley Peters, and this included "two-thirds of the Building standing thereon", the line running right through the house. Hannah Peters received the other third in her widow's dower — "the Easterly Room with one third part of the Cellar of a small Dwelling House standing on Number Two."

The Peters brothers were Andover men and they had no interest in these legacies beyond what they might get by selling them. A buyer soon appeared in the person of Joshua Wilkins of Middleton, a cordwainer, who in successive transactions acquired the lots along the highway. His first purchase, on April 11, 1759 (128-199), was a three-acre lot south of the highway, which had been assigned to Samuel and John Peters, he paying forty pounds. He next bought, April 18, 1761, the land owned by William Peters, who was then living in Medfield (128-199). On June 29, 1762, he bought from Bimsley Peters Lot No. 2, with the two-thirds share of the house. Bimsley had mortgaged both land and building to Thomas Poor of Andover, and had died March 11, 1762. Poor sold the property to Wilkins for the amount of the mortgage (122-138), and he thus became the owner of two-thirds of the dwelling.

It is possible that Wilkins occupied the house during the next few years and he must have come to some unrecorded agreement with Mrs. Peters giving him the full ownership of it. On January 12, 1770 (122-140), he sold this farm of thirty-five acres to Abigail Fuller, an unmarried woman, the daughter of Jacob Fuller and sister of Dr. David Fuller. It now had both a house and a barn on it, for which she paid Wilkins 120 pounds. The boundaries did not run the original length to the north, but extended eastwardly the width of four lots, or more than 400 feet, from Estey's land to the farm of Capt. Andrew Fuller. Included was the three-acre piece south of the road, apparently the same formerly owned by the Bayleys, bounding west on Isaac Wilkins.

Any discussion of the Bradstreet house must take into consideration the possibility that its cellar and even its frame may have belonged to the original Bayley home. In an effort to identify the present site as the one owned by Bayley, Mr. Masse and I made a careful measurement of the frontage of Lots 1 and 2 of the Peters estate. The west boundary of Lot 1 began at Estey's land, later Merriam's. A gate post put up by Merriam is still in place at this point. From this post we measured six rods (ninety-nine feet), the width of Lot 1, and then, following the curve of the original road (at King Street where it leaves Maple), we went eight rods (132 feet), the width of Lot No. 2. This brought us exactly opposite the doorpost of the present house. In fact the line would still run directly through the building, two-thirds on Lot 2 and one-third on Lot 3. The coincidence that the Bayley doorpost was in the same line confirmed our belief that the Bradstreet house was either the same or one built on the same foundation.

Abigail Fuller was a remarkable woman. A month after buying this farm, when she was thirty-six years old, she married Dr. Joseph Bradstreet of Topsfield and went there to live. The following year she had a child whose name is given in Topsfield records as Joseph. Abigail had made a mistake in this marriage, for the doctor was an alcoholic and perhaps worse. She may have feared this outcome when she bought the little house. However that may be, she came back to it, got an immediate divorce from Dr. Bradstreet, and lived there until she died at the age of ninety-five. A divorce in the eighteenth century was an almost unheard-of proceeding. The fact that the province granted it with little delay and that the doctor was ordered to make quarterly payments for her support, is proof that there must have been good grounds for the separation. In place of alimony Abigail asked that the doctor should relinquish his rights in her property, and it was so arranged. She changed her boy's name to Ezra, after her deceased brother, and he was always so known in Middleton.

The tiny house was probably large enough for so small a menage. Unfortunately Ezra inherited the weaknesses of his father. Although he married, he became unable to support his family, and the household must have been an unhappy one. The wife died in February 1829, and the mother two months later. Abigail Bradstreet had become a town charge, her only assets being the farm, which then comprised fifty-eight acres, valued at $1034. Ezra was also cared for by the town, and his real estate was sold to pay his debts when he died on September 6, 1831.

Jeremiah Richardson, who had been one of Mrs. Bradstreet's guardians, bought the place at auction for $515 (500-208) and was its owner until his death in 1856. As Richardson died intestate, his sons and daughters divided the thirty-nine-acre farm by agreement. On March 27, 1857 (568-290), the heirs by a quit-claim deed gave their brother Jasper the Bradstreet swamp north of the Essex Railroad and the house lot with the dwelling, shop, and other buildings. The bounds of the lot began on Salem Road (Maple Street) at the corner of the way leading to the depot (Washington Street) and ran to the railroad; on the north it was bounded by the track to the land of James Linn; then bounded on Linn and another owner back to Salem Road; then west to the first bounds. The Bradstreet barn lot, so called, with the barn thereon, as well as the three-acre piece south of the main road, was quit-claimed the same day to one of the daughters, Alathea, wife of George A.

Currier. It lay on the west corner of Washington Street opposite the house lot and contained one acre.

Jasper Richardson, who lived in Gloucester, sold the dwelling house, shop, and one acre of land to Abraham McIntire on March 28, 1859, for $550. The McIntires lived in the Bradstreet house for twelve years. Mrs. McIntire became mentally deranged, and, although her husband tried to appease her by transferring half the property to her "sole and separate use free from the interfering or control of her present or future husband," matters did not improve. By 1877 Mrs. McIntire had been declared insane and her husband appointed her guardian. Her half of the land, house, and shop was then sold at auction December 3, 1878, to Russell S. Bennett, the highest bidder. McIntire gave him a deed April 15, 1879, and on the same day they joined in selling the whole place to Benjamin T. McGlauflin of Middleton (1015-191). Two generations of the McGlauflin family occupied the house until 1941, when it was purchased by its present owner Chester K. Masse.

Little can be said about the early features of this attractive home; it has been remodeled and renovated so much, it is hard to discern its original condition. It did have one peculiar, one may say, unique feature: its center chimney stood at a diagonal to its roof line and to the road. Before the McGlauflins bought the house, it had two small corner fireplaces, back to back, in the two front rooms, in conformity with the angle of the chimney. This strange construction is evident in a picture of the house taken in the sixties or seventies.

THE ESTEY TAVERN

In the *Acts & Resolves Public and Private of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay*, 1753-1755, appears "A Petition of Samuel Bradford of Middleton in the County of Essex, showing that he is much desired by Persons concerned to set up a Tavern in said Town, where at present there is none; Praying that the Court of General Sessions of the Peace for said County may be allowed to grant him License — On December 9, 1753, the Essex authorities were empowered by the Provincial Council to "License the petr to keep a Publick House of Entertainment In the Town of Middleton."

Samuel Bradford was a carpenter and housewright who at this time had owned land in Middleton for more than ten years. There is no proof whatever that in 1753 he was the owner of the land where the tavern still stands in Middleton Square. On February 15, 1743, he had bought twenty acres of the estate of Daniel Wilkins from Isaac Wilkins, the administrator, but this property abuts on various members of the Wilkins family who lived in the vicinity of Will's Hill at some distance from

Estey Tavern in Middleton Square. Built by Samuel Bradford in 1753, run by him as an inn until 1763 and then by John Estey until 1817. Later managed by Amos Batchelder and his descendants.

the Square. In this deed (86-45) he is called "housewright of Middleton." A month later, May 8, 1743, his father William Bradford, a weaver of Boxford, bought from Ebenezer Case another twenty acres with a house and barn upon it. The next day he deeded (87-141) one-half of the purchase, for love, to his son Samuel, and also included one-half of his land in Topsfield and one-half of other lands in Middleton and Topsfield. The tavern lot may have been part of the "other" lands, but, if so, it has not been recorded.

Samuel Bradford built the tavern soon thereafter and became its first proprietor. During the 1750's and early 1760's the road south of it was always called "the road from Bradford's Tavern to the Meeting House." Not much is known about how he prospered in this new capacity. In any event, he conveyed both buildings and land to John Estey for £200, December 24, 1763 (122-38). The property was bounded south and west by Andover Road and east and north by Estey's own land.

John Estey was the son of Jonathan and grandson of John, who had moved to Will's Hill in 1698 and bought the house of Aaron Way, which stood on this same site. The large leanto or ell on the east end of the tavern actually encloses a seventeenth-century stone chimney base and is constructed of members from a seventeenth-century house. Beams with chamfering ending in lambs'-tongue stops form part of the framework, and timbers cut out to accommodate studs show that they had been used in an earlier structure. A fireplace above the early chimney base still exists in the kitchen of the aparment on the north side of the ground floor. At present it is walled up, but, if opened, might give proof of its antiquity. The old Way house was evidently dismantled and thus incorporated into this part of the tavern.

Johnathan Estey had inherited his father's lands and houses, but in 1735 he was living on the opposite corner, south of what is now Maple Street. In that year, on March 31 (70-179), he conveyed to Solomon Wilkins for ten pounds one-half an acre of land for a mill right, "near to said Estey's Dwelling house — on North and South side of a brook that Runs out of — Wills Hill pond." This was undoubtedly the site of the "Corne meel" that his father John Estey had mentioned in his will as being "near my hous." This will was drawn in 1714 and the mill had apparently gone out of use by 1735.

On February 10 of 1735-6 (81-34), Jonathan sold his house on this lot to Isaac Wilkins, and he himself appears to have lived thereafter on the northern part of the Estey farm near the "Neck meadow" and Pout Pond. He had married Susanna Monroe of Lexington shortly before this time and they eventually had a family of seven children. He was active in Middleton until after 1776.

The tavern building, creation of Samuel Bradford, was a splendid edifice in its day. Its center entrance on the west front led into a small hallway flanked by handsome rooms on each side. The one on the southwest corner was furnished with sliding shutters intended for privacy and protection from heat and cold. The northwest room has been stripped of its original woodwork and is of no interest today. Both of these rooms had fireplaces in the chimney that rises west of the ridgepole.

A wide hallway ran across the entire building back of these rooms. It is said that stairways once went up both north and south from this cross passage. They have now disappeared, as the whole area has been taken in to the apartments contrived on the ground floor. Another entire set of rooms filled the north half of the first story. Northeast of the cross hall there was, and still is, a very pretty little parlor with paneled woodwork and a fireplace opening into a second large chimney. This stack also served a huge fireplace in the southeast end of the house. As recently as 1960, it was completely equipped with a long crane with pothooks and trammels still hanging from it.

East of this part of the tavern the large ell or leanto mentioned as containing parts of the Way house is actually in the basement, as half of its height is below ground. The real kitchen of the old tavern was situated here, where a tremendous fireplace still supplied with crane, trammels, pot hangers, spits, etc., was opened out when its present owners, the Misses Lillian and Helen Richardson, investigated their property. They had the bricks of the hearth carefully relaid according to original dimensions. In the basement the whole capacious structure of the house is evident. The two enormous arches of the chimneys still hold their tremendous weight without settling.

The second story of the building has on the north side a beautiful little chamber with fireplace paneling flanked by fluted pilasters in eigheenth-century style. The south side of the second story is taken up with the domed-ceilinged ballroom that runs the length of the main house. This handsome hall has unfortunately been ruined by a recent lowering of the ceiling and by service pipes running through it.

The third floor must have been a dormitory for drovers and others who thought nothing of sleeping under primitive conditions. A long room on the north side could easily have accommodated eighteen or twenty men. For the comfort of these less fastidious guests a small fireplace was contrived in the open attic. It is based on a narrow brick arch that once formed a passage through which one could walk from the front door to the center of the house. It now leads into a closet and is no longer used.

An interesting feature of the third story is the lathing and framework of the ballroom ceiling, whose arch brings it a good two feet above the attic floor. The delicate curves of its bent laths show its true beauty far more than does the plastered ceiling of the room itself.

John Estey became the proprietor of Bradford's Tavern in 1763 when he was only twenty-one years of age. On June 20 he had bought thirty acres of land from his father, for which he paid £120 (122-37) [perhaps not an actual sale], and in the following December he made the purchase of the inn from Bradford (122-38). The tavern land was not more than one acre, for when John mortgaged these holdings in 1769, they were described as being thirty-one acres. This deed (126-190) shows that the land bounded north "on a way leading to my Father Jonathan Estey's." Jonathan Estey later enlarged his son's estate by a gift of forty acres running north of John's other property to Pout Pond Brook. In 1785 John Estey also bought the large farm of Capt. Benjamin Gardner, including a house and barn, on the west side of Andover Road.

Until the early 1800's Estey carried on a successful enterprise as an innkeeper. The tavern was a regular stopover and eating place for all kinds of people traveling between Salem and Andover. His son John also had a going business in partnership with his brother-in-law Daniel Fuller running a saw and grist mill on Andover Brook north of Forest Street. Rev. William Bentley of Salem mentions the tavern a number of times in his diary.[31] In an entry dated March 29, 1789, he gives it a name that I have not heard elsewhere. "On Tuesday, March 29, I went for Andover. I dined at the Black Horse in Middleton & while dinner was preparing I viewed the Pond lying west of the road at a 1/4 mile's distance. The Pond measures a mile E & W & about 1/2 mile north & S. A road passesby it on the north, on which side the pond is viewed with great advantage from the top of a hill adjoining." Again, on January 22, 1796, he records: [32] "We left Salem at 10 & found the road tolerable as far as Eastie's in Middleton, with whom we stopped & dined. We left the house after dinner & reached Stevens in Andover at 2 o'clock."

After the turn of the century both father and son seem to have had financial difficulties. The new Newburyport Turnpike was taking through traffic to Boston, and Estey had engaged in several dubious real estate ventures. In 1809, September 1, John Estey entered into an agreement with Jeremiah Flint, Asa Howe, and Daniel Fuller, by which he mortgaged his property, including the tavern and all his land as far north as Pout Pond Brook, and the large acreage that he had acquired from Captain Gardner. This mortgage was foreclosed on April 19, 1817, and the farm, so called, with buildings and 140 acres was conveyed to Billy Emerson, Joseph Batchelder, and Moses Wilds, all of

Topsfield, for $5000. Five years later Batchelder bought out the others and took full title to the property.

Joseph Batchelder of Topsfield does not seem to have operated the tavern, but rather to have turned it over to his son Amos, who was its proprietor for many years. Amos had married Betsy Porter Gould of Middleton in 1819 and raised his family in the inn. A passage from Bentley shows that Amos was already in charge in September 1818.[33] "Went for Andover — We found Easties removed from his great age, & a Capt. Bachelor at the public house, never well kept."

Again he notes: [34] "After Coffee at four we set out upon our return by the Academy & Institute & by the new Middleton road to Salem (Forest Street). W found this new road solitary but in good order & under late repair. When we reached Easties, near Middleton Meeting House, we found a new Landlord, Bachelor, who very kindly instructed us respecting the new road passing the M.H. & over Danvers plains —."

Joseph W. Batchelder, Amos's brother, was also living in Middleton after his marriage in 1830 to Nancy, daughter of Daniel Fuller, and granddaughter of John Estey. He does not seem to have had anything to do with the running of the tavern, and he and his family removed to Topsfield in 1839. He was, however, the first postmaster in Middleton, and carried on this function, I believe, in the tavern. Amos Batchelder succeeded him in this capacity after 1839. Joseph A. Batchelder, Amos's son, was the third of the name to hold the office. He continued to live in the tavern until his death in 1892.

An account book kept by Amos Batchelder from 1838 to 1854[35] gives an excellent picture of the establishment. A great many of the patrons were traveling with their horses or driving herds of cattle. The animals were fed and pastured on Batchelder's broad acres, although occasionally a rush of trade forced him to rent pasturage from others, as when he turned twenty-six cattle and 150 sheep into Dr. Nichols's field.

Prices for board and lodging were absurdly low by modern standards, as, for instance, sixty-two cents for supper, breakfast, and lodging, but no doubt they were as high in proportion to other costs of living as they are today. Batchelder sold a great deal of liquor in his day. New England rum, or the choicer kind from the West Indies, was the favored drink, but gin or cider could be had, too. A running account kept by Ezra Bradstreet in the winter of 1818-1819 mentions bowls of punch, mugs of toddy or cider, and glasses of brandy, with rum appearing most often.

Amos Batchelder added to his business by renting rooms for various purposes. In the 1840s after the old church had been torn down, the town no longer had a place for town meetings. The big ballroom or "hall" on the second floor of the building was used for such occasions. Many smaller meetings for the selectmen or committees were accommodated in one of the tavern rooms, often for $1.00 in the daytime, but $1.50 for an evening meeting with light provided.

A livery business was also carried on, as many townspeople had no transportation of their own and were obliged to hire a horse and chaise to go to neighboring towns.

It will be seen that the tavern offered services of the most ordinary type. It is possible that it catered to a more fastidious clientele during Estey's ownership, in spite of Bentley's remark that it was never well kept. As time went on, this failing must have been more pronounced. The Batchelders were still running the inn as late as 1859, when the Essex Institute had a field meeting in Middleton on June 15. The report of this occasion reads: "A short walk, though a very warm one," led to "the 'village green' of Middleton, for so many years an adjunct, like so many of its class in New-England, of the village tavern; in this case known as 'Batchelders's'. 'Bachelder's Tavern', however, after having been for an indefinite period the favorite caravanserai of every drover or teamster who plied his weary calling between Salem and New-Hampshire, has lapsed from its earlier dignity, and only figures now as a plain, substantial, and orderly looking residence."

Joseph A. Batchelder kept the house throughout his lifetime, although he may not have been running it actively as a hostelry at the date of his death in 1892. It was later acquired by the family of Hazen K. Richardson, and is presently owned by his daughters, Lillian and Helen Richardson. It is now divided into three apartments.

CHAPTER 10 NOTES

1. Rev. J. Augustine Hood, *Farewell Discourse delivered at Middleton, June 25, 1854.*
2. Abbott Lowell Cummings and John F. Cole.
3. The date June 3, 1698, for the death of Thomas, as given by more than one historian, is here seen to be incorrect. Thomas made his will June 3, 1698, and died before July 18.
4. *The Diary of the Revd. Daniel Fuller, with his account of his Family & other matters.* Written at Gloucester circa 1775. Privately published, New York, 1894.
5. Vol. XLVI, No. 3, (July 1910).
6. Martha J. Averill, *Genealogical Note Books,* in Essex Institute.
7. George Francis Dow, *Everyday Life in the Massachusetts Bay Colony,* 75. "*Grogam, Grogane,* A course fabric of silk, of mohair and wool, or these mixed with silk; often stiffened with gum."

8. Ibid., 73. "*Cheney,* a worsted or woolen stuff."
9. Ibid., 72. "*Calamanco,*" A woolen stuff of Flanders, glossy on the surface and woven with a satin twill and checkered in the warp."
10. Ibid., 81. "*Shalloon,* A closely woven woolen material used for linings."
11. Ibid., 80. "*Sagathy,* A slight woolen stuff, a kind of serge or ratteen, sometimes mixed with a little silk."
12. Map surveyed for the selectmen of Middleton by Moses Dorman.
13. H. F. Walling, *Essex County chart,* 1856.
14. Sidney Perley, "Hathorne; Part of Salem Village in 1700." *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* LIII, 332, (October 1917).
15. Ibid., LIV, 117, (April 1918).
16. Lura Woodside Watkins, "Where was the Indian Bridge over the Ipswich River?", *Old-Time New England,* XLVI, No. 3, (Winter 1956).
17. Benjamin Peabody, *Account Book,* Copies in Essex Institute and Middleton Historical Society.
18. More commonly called Beech, or Beechy, Brook in the 1700's.
19. Cf. "Slaves in Middleton."
20. David Stiles, "Middleton," *History of Essex County, Massachusetts,* D. Hamilton Hurd, ed., Philadelphia, 1888.
21. These journals with a group of family letters and other documents are owned by the Middleton Historical Society.
22. *Danvers Historical Collections,* Vols. 18, 19, and 20, 1930-1932.
23. Copies in Essex Institute and Middleton Historical Society.
24. Cf. "The Colonel Benjamin Peabody House."
25. Cf. "Slaves in Middleton."
26. Cf. "Water Mills of Middleton."
27. Thomas, born May 16, 1682, Elizabeth, July 16, 1684, and Nicholas, September 26, 1686, have been erroneously entered in Salem records as the children of John Bayley, to the confusion of several genealogists.
28. *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* VIII.
29. Obviously an error. This should read *northerly.*
30. *Massachusetts Archives,* CXL, 281 and 282; *Legislative Records of the Council,* XX, 125.
31. William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley D. D.,* Salem, 1905 - 1914, II, 120.
32. Ibid., II, 171.
33. Ibid., LV, 548.
34. Ibid., IV, 606.
35. In the Middleton Historical Society Collections.

PART III

The Town

CHAPTER XI

Early Town Government

EARLY TOWN GOVERNMENT

Middleton was incorporated by act of the Province of Massachusetts Bay on June 20, 1728. The town's original copy of its charter was found tucked away in the town vault by Maurice E. Tyler, the town clerk, nearly two hundred years later. Mr. Tyler had the document suitably restored, mounted between sheets of transparent silk, and encased in a durable cover. The document defined the boundaries of the new town and gave it the name Middleton. The privileges of a town were granted provided that the "Inhabitants of sd Town of Middleton do within the space of two years from the publication of this act Erect and finish a suitable House for the Publick Worship of God and procure and settle a learned Orthodox Minister of good Conversation and make Provision for his comfortable and honourable support, and likewise provide a School Master to instruct their youth in writing and reading."

At the same time the house of Representatives "ordered that mr Jonathan Fuller, a prinsapel Inhabitent of the Town of Middleton, be and hereby is fully empowered & directed to Asembel the free holders and other Inhabitents of the said Town to Convene as soon as may be to Elect and Choose Town officers then to stand until the council meeting in March next."

The charter was presented to the people at their first town meeting, held at the home of Dr. Daniel Felch on July 9, 1728. Th Felch house stood nearly opposite the entrance to the present Oakdale Cemetery. There is a tradition that the meeting assembled under a giant oak tree still remembered by older residents a few years ago, but which was cut down when street car tracks were laid on Maple Street in 1901. Since the meeting took place in warm weather and the house was probably overcrowded, this tradition may be correct. For this reason the Middleton

Historical Society has put up a marker on the site of the oak tree. During 1728 the town meetings continued to be held at Dr. Felch's.

At this first meeting the following officers were chosen to serve until the annual meeting in the following March: Sgt. Thomas Fuller [Sr.], moderator; Edward Putnam, town clerk; Sgt. Thomas Fuller, Samuel Symonds, Thomas Robinson, Edward Putnam, and Benjamin Wilkins, selectmen and assessors; Daniel Kinney, treasurer; Francis Peabody and Isaac Wilkins, constables; John Fuller, tything man; Joseph Fuller, Ebenezer Nichols, Francis Elyott, surveyors of the highways; Jonathan Fuller and John How, fence viewers; Joseph Wilkins and Thomas Elyott, hog reeves; Nathaniel Carrel, sealer of leather. Nathaniel Towne was chosen by the voters for school master. It was left to the selectmen to supply a minister.

At the next meeting, July 19, 1728, provisions were made for a town pound, and five men, Lt. Thomas Fuller, son of the first Thomas, Jonathan Fuller, his grandson, Benjamin Wilkins, John Burton, and Joseph Knight were chosen to complete the work on the meetinghouse and to raise and expend the money for doing so. The selectmen were empowered to lay out roads.

In assessing the importance and the admirable system of these early meetings, it must be remembered that Middleton was but a small and scattered community. When the inhabitants were taxed to pay the minister in 1729, one hundred and eleven persons were rated regardless of whether they attended the church or no. A large proportion of those on this list never took any part whatever in the town government, although, as in the present time, they may have gone to town meetings. The active townsmen were the members of the new church. There were, however, only twenty-two of them in 1729. Many of those who lived in the former Boxford and Topsfield areas continued to attend the churches in those towns, while some retained their connections with Salem Village. They were not rated for Middleton. A town meeting, therefore, was a small affair, which could very well have functioned in a dwelling house. By March 1729, all meetings were held in "our meetinghouse." The warrant was posted by the constables on the door of the building where it would be seen by all concerned.

There has perhaps never been a more truly direct method of town government than that carried on by this small group of farmers and artisans. That they were able from the beginning to establish so orderly a system was undoubtedly due to the fact that they had been familiar with such procedures in their church government. Although at first they limited activity in town meetings to church members, on January 27, 1737/8, they voted "to allow all the free householders belonging to the

Town of Middleton to vote at the next March meeting."

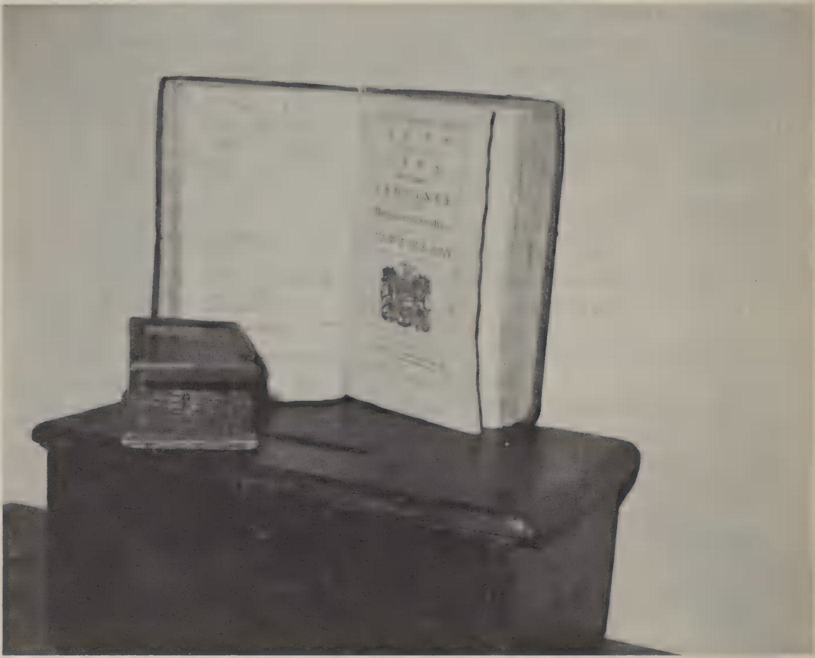
In reading the town meeting records one will find that officers were "Chosen" and then voted upon. No doubt the choosing was done to some extent before a meeting, but we may take it that the candidates for office were nominated from the floor and then voted on by the assembly. Committees for special services, such as laying out roads or raising money, or "agreeing" with a minister, were picked in the same way. Persons for particular functions were likewise chosen in this manner.

In the record of this first meeting at Middleton we find a number of petty offices that were necessary in a small farming community. Fence viewers, for instance, were required to make periodic examinations of all fences and stone walls to prevent animals from getting out of their proper bounds or into the neighbors' fields. There was indeed a need for this supervision, especially in relation to hogs. Until 1799 swine in Middleton were allowed to run at large when properly "ringed" and yoked. The hog reeve had the cruel task of piercing the animal's snout and inserting a metal ring to keep him from rooting, while the yoke prevented his getting through or over walls.

The tithing man or men supervised the humans in town to make sure that they were attending church and supporting it properly. They also watched over them when in church to see that they paid attention to the minister and did not fall asleep during his long sermons.

Several other wardens were added to this list as the years went on. In 1736 Edward Putnam was chosen as a surveyor of flax, and for many years persons were named as individuals or on committees to see that fish could come up the river to spawn. This was first mentioned on May 18, 1737,when it was voted that Timothy Fuller "should get the fish corse cleared up Ipswich River so as the alewives may come up into our Town so the inhabitants may catch them plentifully." Five years later Fuller and Isaac Wilkins were chosen "a committee to take Care that the ways at the mill Dam be keept open for the Elewife & other Fish may have theire Free passage up the River & brooke & Streams where they ushally Com to Spoon." In the early days shad were also to be found in Ipswich River. The privilege of catching them was sometimes sold to the highest bidder and sometimes at a price set by the town. Fishing for pickerel through the ice was permitted without restriction. There is no doubt that these fish were a main source of food supply.

In March 1747 Thomas Cave was chosen "to take care ot the Deer," or, in other words, as a "deare Reef." This office was later held by Thomas Wilkins, John Lammon, John Flint, Timothy Fuller, and others. In 1760, when John Lammon was deer reeve, he was charged with



Old Town Ballot Box, the Town Clerk's Book "Acts and Law of the Province, 1759", and small box dated 1760 for drawing names.

taking care "that the Dear are not killed in an Improper Season." This, of course, was the same service now performed by state forest wardens.

Other specific elective offices created from time to time were surveyors of lumber, field drivers, who rounded wandering animals into the pound, and surveyors of highways. The latter were responsible for the condition of the roads, which were almost invariably "laid out" by the selectmen. By 1800 the town had a sealer of weights and measures and a tax collector. The latter office was auctioned off to the lowest bidder — that is, to the person who would accept the smallest percentage per dollar on bills collected.

One important function of the town meeting was to select men to go to the grand jury and inferior courts at Salem. These men were not chosen by vote except perhaps in the earliest times. Their names were drawn from a jury box. This first appears in the records in 1752, when "decken Samuel Nickels was drue [drew] out of the box to serve on the petty Jury." In a later entry this utility was referred to as the 'inferiour box." In 1954 the selectmen of Middleton gave to the Middleton Historical Society for preservation a nicely made little box with the date *1760* carved on it. It has a sliding cover which could be opened far enough for the insertion of a man's hand. This was, in fact, the jury box of 1760.

As the town grew, new offices were created and filled to meet new needs. Overseers of the poor were first chosen in 1784 to take over from the selectmen their previous duties in looking after dependent persons. The overseers of the poor were thereafter an important department of the town organization, and their reports were often as extensive as those of the selectmen themselves. Middleton never built a poorhouse, but took care of its old, needy, or indigent neighbors by a peculiar system of auctioning them off yearly to the highest bidders. In this, manner a home was assured, with a little spending money, while the town provided clothes. In return the dependent person did whatever work he was able to do around the house or farm.

As may be seen in the chapters on the churches and the schools, the selectmen in the eighteenth century were all-powerful in regulating these two departments. Not until 1808, when the town had been divided into three school districts, each with its own committee, was there any effort at delegating the supervision of these important divisions. The meetinghouse was always considered town property. After the Congregational Society had split in 1832 and built a new church, the old meetinghouse was left in the hands of a few people who were unable to care for it and it could no longer be used by the town. In September 1842 the question was raised as to "what method the town will take in regard to a place for holding town meetings." The last meeting at the old house was held on April 1, 1844. After that the building was abandoned, and from March 3, 1845, until November 7, 1848, the town had its sessions in the hall or ballroom of the Batchelder Tavern or in the Centre School.

It would be impossible to relate in detail the many events and circumstances in connection with Middleton's public affairs. Everything from the purchase of blank books to the choice of a representative to the General Court was decided in town meeting. The matter of sending a representative deserves notice. From 1740 and 1741, when Timothy Fuller was chosen to attend the "Grate and General" Court, no delegate from Middleton appeared in that august assembly until 1810. Year after year the subject was dismissed in town meeting, and no one was selected for the office. In 1804 the town had voted to send Dr. David Fuller, but in the following month the vote was reconsidered and it was decided that he had not been "legally and duly chosen." In 1810, therefore, John Estey and others presented a petition to the town asking that a representative be chosen, and Asa How was elected to the office by fifty-one votes. He served three terms. The town dismissed the matter thereafter for some ten years, when Dr. Ezra Nichols held the office for one term in 1823. Throughout many years Middleton was represented only now and then.

At first glance one might assume that Middleton was indifferent to the calls of duty outside of its own isolated community. This, however, was not the case. The difficulties of travel, especially in winter, must have presented insuperable obstacles to attending court in Boston. Until well after 1800 the only means of getting about was by horseback and there were almost no roads better than a cart track until the Newburyport Turnpike was opened in 1803. Other difficulties were the demands of planting in spring, farming in summer, and haying in fall. It may be noted that the greater number of those who did respond to this service were not farmers. David Fuller and Ezra Nichols were doctors, Ephraim Fuller a trader, and Amos Batchelder an innkeeper.

Middleton took its part in other branches of state and federal government. The town voted regularly for governor and other state officers and for United States senators and representatives. Balloting was probably carried on by the simple method of writing the names of candidates on slips of paper and dropping them in the town ballot box. This old box with a slot in the cover, now owned by the Middleton Historical Society, was still in use not long ago when there was a question of a voice vote in town meeting. Judging by the strap hinges inside the cover and the early type paint streaked red and black, it was probably made for the town soon after the Revolution.

CHAPTER XII

Military History

THE COLONIAL WARS

Before Middleton was incorporated as a town men from the area were fighting in the various colonial wars. It is difficult to trace the earlier combatants, because they went from the four towns of Salem, Boxford, Topsfield, and Andover, and are recorded separately.

Only two of the colonial wars were actually fought in New England — the Pequot war (1636-1637) and King Philip's war (1675-1676). The later conflicts — King William's war, lasting from 1690 to 1697, Queen Anne's war from 1702 to 1713, and King George's war (1745-1748), were waged on the western front and in Canada. The only fighting that continued after Middleton was organized in 1728 was the so-called French and Indian war, which was carried on principally in New York State and Canada over the nine years from 1754 to 1763.

Middleton men could have taken part in every one of these struggles except the first one. We find only a few from the area who helped to destroy the power of King Philip in the Narragansett fight in Rhode Island. As an incentive to bravery these men were promised large grants of land, if they were successful. The grants were not made for some years and were not taken up by the original grantees. However, several towns in New Hampshire were eventually laid out on these lands, and the descendants of the men of the swamp fight settled there at a later time. "Narragansett No. 3" (Amherst) was awarded to inhabitants of Salem, Marblehead, Lynn, Gloucester, Andover, Topsfield, and Boxford, and hence Middleton.

A number of Middleton's early settlers had military titles that in most cases indicate nothing more than membership in a train band or in the militia. It is therefore difficult to judge who the actual fighting men were. Lieut. Thomas Fuller, son of the first Thomas, seems to have been the only man from Salem Village who we can say with certainty fought in

King Philip's war at Narragansett. In 1728 his son William made a claim for the land in Amherst that had been granted to his father. This he may have conveyed to his brother John, who owned such a land title when he died in 1735. He willed it to his son Andrew, who never used it, although he bought up another claim that had come to Daniel Kenney from his father, Thomas. Andrew Fuller sold these tracts. A grant was claimed by Andrew Peters, Middleton's first minister, in the name of his father, Andrew Peters.

Seven Middleton men went to the front at the beginning of the French and Indian war in a company commanded by Capt. Hobbs in Col. Winslow's regiment. They were Amos Gould, Matthew Martin, Bimsley Peabody, Walter Ross, and Aquilla, Bray, and Phineas Wilkins. They were sent to Fort Lawrence in Nova Scotia on the south side of the international border, and may have witnessed the tragic death of their commanding officer, Capt. Howe, who with a number of his men were ambushed and slaughtered by the Indians.

Andrew Fuller was an active participant in the French and Indian war from the beginning to the end. He enlisted as a private early in the war and became a lieutenant in the Danvers company of Capt. Samuel Flint from September 9 to December 17, 1755. This company, which apparently included no other men from Middleton, was in Col. Ichabod Plaisted's regiment and took part in the expedition led by Gen. John Winslow against Crown Point: In May 1756 the company was returned to Boston with Andrew Fuller in command as captain. In July he was back at Fort Edward and in October 1756 at Fort William Henry.

In the spring of 1758 Capt. Fuller's company, under Col. Jonathan Bagley, was enlisted "for the reduction of Canada." Under Fuller were Lieut. Israel Hutchinson of Danvers, Lieut. Archelaus Fuller of Middleton, and the following Middleton men: Job Holt, Isaac Peabody, Walter Ross, Richard Skidmore, Abner Stiles, Sgt. Joseph Symonds, Elisha Upton, Aquilla Wilkins, Asaph Wilkins, Corp. Daniel Wilkins, Stephen Wilkins, and Joshua Wright.

Rev. John Cleaveland, chaplain of the regiment, accompanied it to the front, and kept a journal which has been published by the Essex Institute.

In the previous year Fort William Henry had been captured by the French under Montcalm. An army of 15,000 men under Lord Jeffrey Amherst marched to Lake George in July 1758, and made a valiant effort to regain the fortress. Montcalm had built an almost impregnable defense by cutting down a forest and constructing an abattis before the fort. The English, who had no artillery, were unable to penetrate this barricade. Four Middleton men were engaged in the attack — Matthew

Martin, Richard Skidmore, John Spence, and Jethro Thomas. Spence was killed in action on August 8, and Thomas was reported dead by late September. These men and their commanding officer, Col. Munro, had fought so bravely they were given the honors of war and were allowed to leave bearing their arms.

In two other companies of Bagley's regiment commanded by Capt. Israel Herrick and Capt. Whipple, we find the names of John Burton, Samuel Carrell, Joseph Fuller, and Bray Wilkins, all of Middleton.

A few men and boys from Middleton were present at the surrender of Louisburg in 1758. A drummer boy, John Barker, sixteen years of age, was among them. Matthew Martin, who had been fighting for four years or more, and Richard Skidmore, were also there, as was Joseph Stiles, a young lad only fifteen years old.

Timothy Mackentire and Isaac Peabody took part in the siege of Ticonderoga, which led to its surrender to the British in 1759.

In 1760 eight boys entered the service from Middleton and marched to the siege of Montreal, which fell on September 7. They were John Averill, Elijah Dunham, Timothy Flint, William Hutchinson, Archelaus Kinney, Samuel Nichols (who was killed on September 13 at the age of sixteen), Solomon Town, and Stephen Young. Two others whose records are not known — Aaron Smith and Israel Wilkins, Jr. — are said to have enlisted in 1761.

Fuller and his men finally got home in the spring of 1759. They were still a part of Col. Bagley's regiment. The stages of their journey from New York State may be traced by the bills rendered by innholders in various towns where they were billeted. Amusing details of the expedition were recorded by Andrew Fuller's cousin Archelaus in a diary which has been published by the Essex Institute.[2] He was the world's worst speller, but he became a colonel in the Revolution and built one of Middleton's finest houses.

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The colonial wars seem to have had no appreciable effect upon the people of Middleton except that some farmers may have been shorthanded and a few people suffered from the loss or disablement of members of their families. The Revolutionary War was a different matter. It touched every inhabitant.

Middleton's first step towards taking part in the struggle for independence came on August 17, 1774, when the town paid at Boston its proportion for the charges of a proposed congress. In September they voted to send a representative to the meeting of the Great and General

Court at Salem to be held October fifth. Capt. Archelaus Fuller was chosen. This gathering of county men was for the purpose of forming a provincial congress. In 1775, on January 10, the town voted to adopt the results of the Continental and Provincial Congress as far as Middleton was concerned. Fuller was again appointed to represent the town at a meeting of the congress to be held at Cambridge on February first.

Danger seemed imminent. The town decided to buy half a barrel of powder and ball and flints in proportion, and they now regulated the training of minutemen, who were to train two half days a week and were to be paid one shilling for every half day's time.

At this point a committee was authorized to collect donations for the relief of the citizens of Boston who were undergoing suffering and privation as the result of the Boston Port Bill. The money raised amounted to £560 old tenor, and the donors included nearly every person in town.

The war began for Middleton on April 19, 1775, when eight of the town's volunteers answered to the widespread "alarm". They were Major Archelaus Fuller, Capt. Benjamin Gardner, Joseph Nichols, Sgt. Benjamin Peabody, Corp. Elijah Wilkins, Corp. Aquilla Wilkins, and privates Enos Wilkins and Israel Curtis. These men did not get into the affray at Lexington and Concord and their services lasted only two days, but they were the first Middleton men to offer their lives and their possessions. It is said that Dr. Silas Meriam, who had been a resident of Concord, also went on horseback to the scene, along with two friends.

On June 17, 1775, Middleton voted (and I quote the measure as recorded by the town clerk) "unamsly that if the connelty Congres Declares independence up pon the kingdom of grat britan that we the inhabitance of Middleton solomonly ingage with our lives and fortens to soprt them in the mesuers so far as we are able."

In Middleton as well as in other towns the prices of goods, provisions, and labor were now carefully regulated. The schedule covered the cost of fresh and salted meats, grains, butter, sugar, molasses, chocolate, and coffee, liquors, both wholesale and retail, woolen and linen cloth, wool and flax, wood, iron and the cost of smiths' work, leather and shoemakers' labor, carpentry work, and other items. New milk was to be sold at two pence per quart, and a laboring man could earn two shillings eight pence a day.

As early as August 25, 1777, a measure was taken that is hard to understand. The town voted to dispose of its guns and gun locks by sale to the inhabitants, at the same time deciding to store the lead and flints as a town stock, which had to be paid for by drawing on the town treasury.

In 1779 the pinch of the war was acutely felt. For a year the selectmen and others had been helping to support the families of soldiers by providing the necessities of life. The town now assumed this burden. There was some controversy as to who should pay the soldiers. At first the town refused to do it, but as more and more men were called for, a committee composed of Capt. Benjamin Peabody, Lieut. Jonathan Lemon, and Lieut. Elijah Wilkins, was authorized to raise money to pay such men as had not been called up by the General Court. This was done by imposing a tax on the inhabitants and their estates.

On August 23, 1779, Dr. Silas Meriam was chosen by the town to attend the meetings of the Constitutional Convention at Concord and Cambridge, held to draw up a constitution. When the new document was first presented on May 22, 1780, the town voted it down. This was typical of this conservative country village. A week later, however, they authorized a committee composed of Rev. Elias Smith, Isaac Kenney, Lieut. Amos Curtis, Israel Kenney, and Lieut. Jonathan Lemon, to take this new form of government into consideration and to report to the town. When their findings were presented, Middleton voted for each article, one by one, and then accepted the constitution. However, they voted not to send a representative to the General Court. It took them another year to come around to that idea. They then picked Asa Stiles, Ezra Putnam, and Elisha Fuller to represent them.

The names of the Middleton men who served in the Revolutionary War are recorded alphabetically in the seventeen volumes of *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War* published by the state in Boston in 1902. After checking through these records, I find that a great many men who enlisted from Middleton had never lived there. Their names do not appear in any other connection in the town. Frank C. Damon, who wrote a great deal of excellent material about Middleton's part in all wars,[3] estimates the number of Middleton's soldiers as 136. As several names are duplicated and others wrongly attributed to Middleton, this appears to be too high a number. I have been able to certify about 125, as in the following list: Thomas Adams, Benjamin Bailey, Mark Bartlet, Archaelaus Batchellor, David Bixby, John Brown, Thomas Burge, Asa Case, Ballard Chandler, Thomas Chaseman, Nathaniel Cobern, Daniel Coburn, John Connelly, Timothy Coughlin, Stephen Curtis, Dudley Curtice, Israel Curtis, Stephen Curtis, Benjamin Dickson, Joseph Dix, Daniel Downing, Israel Dreggs, Daniel Dudley, Jonathan Dwinel, Primus Emanel, Bister Everall, Robert Felton, John Flint, Archelaus Fuller, David Fuller, John Fuller, Nehemiah Fuller, Abraham Gage, Robert Gage, Benjamin Gardner, Giles Gilbert, Ebenezer Gustin, Ezra Gustin, John Herrick, William Holt, Peter Hubbard, Daniel Jacques, Ebenezer Johnson, Archelaus Kenney, Joseph Knight, Jacob Lancaster, Nathaniel Lancaster, Samuel Martin, Francis Marvel, John Mauir, Jacob McIntire, Samuel Middleton, Jr., Nathaniel Morton, John Moyler, Joseph Nichols, John Oakes, Thomas Oakes, Primus Osgood, Amos Peabody, Andrew Peabody, Stephen Peabody, Benjamin Peabody, Bimsley Peabody, (two others of the same name), Daniel Peabody, (two others), Jonathan Peabody (two others) Samuel Peabody, (another), Eliphalet Perrins, Samuel Perry, Samuel Plumb, chaplain, Primus, Ezra Putnam, Andrew Richardson, John Richardson, Jonathan Richardson, Scipio, Abraham Smith, Ebenezer Smith, Elias Smith, chaplain, Robert Stone, William Stone, Uzziel Southey, Israel Thomas, Richard Thomas, Elisha Upton, Joshua Upton, Benjamin Waldo, James Wall, John Warnell, James Watt, Stephen Wilbur, Stephen Wilkins, Abner Wilkins, Benjamin Wilkins, David Wilkins, Jonah Wilkins, Nehemiah Wilkins, Phineas Wilkins, Stephen Wilkins, Uriah Wilkins, Jonathan, 2d., Wilkins, Reuben Wilkins, Aquilla Wilkins, David Wilkins, Elijah Wilkins, Enos Wilkins, Hezekiah Wilkins, John Wilkins, Richard Wilkins, Stephen Wilkins, Thomas Wilkins, William Wilkins, William Wilson, David Wright, John (or Jonathan) Wright, John Write.

The first contingent to leave Middleton was composed of twenty or more young men under the command of Major Archelaus Fuller in Lt.-Col. John Mansfield's 19th Essex regiment. They were parishioners of Rev. Elias Smith, who preached a strong farewell sermon for them on May 14, 1775, on the eve of their departure. Smith was officially attached to Capt. Ezra Newhall's company in the same regiment, and it is highly probable that he accompanied the boys to their camp at Winter Hill. By his own record he preached this sermon again at Winter Hill on August six.[4]

Archelaus attained the highest rank of any of the men from Middleton. When he died of smallpox at Charlestown, New Hampshire, on August 25, 1776, he had reached the rank of lieutenant colonel. Benjamin Peabody, who began the war as a lieutenant, soon became a captain. With this title he was stationed at West Point during the latter part of the conflict, where it was his duty to keep the orderly books.[5] It is said that he had some part in the business of laying the second iron cable across the Hudson River — a measure taken to prevent the passage of British warships. Peabody received the rank of lieutenant-colonel after the war was concluded. Ezra Putnam, who had fought in the French and Indian war, was a major throughout the Revolution. He entered the service on May 3, 1775. Capt. Benjamin Gardner answered the alarm of April 19, 1775, as a sergeant, but rose to the rank of captain in 1777.

He lived on the west side of what is now North Main Street, but removed to Marblehead a few years after peace was declared.

Dr. Silas Meriam in his capacity as a surgeon was also attached to the Revolutionary forces. He served from June 1776 to September 1776 in Col. Edward Wigglesworth's regiment. He was later taken prisoner by the British, but was released on February 24, 1778, in exchange for British prisoners. He then held the rank of surgeon's mate.[6]

As far as I have been able to learn from the state records, only one person beside Col. Fuller died during the war. He was a negro slave, whose name was Primus Emanuel, also called Prince. He enlisted on February 24, 1777, as a private in Capt. James Bancrofts' company, Col. Michael Jackson's regiment. Primus was reported to have died June 11, 1778. It is quite possible that he was killed in action. If so, he was the only man from Middleton who achieved that distinction.

It may be noted that several other negro servants enlisted in the Revolution. One was Bister Everall (probably Averill), a young colored man of twenty-five who went to Fishkill, New York, on a nine-months enlistment in June 1778. Scipio, a negro, entered the war on February 12, 1778, and served for three years in Capt. Brooks's company in Col. Jackson's regiment. Another colored man named Primus enlisted the same day for a three-year term in Capt. Bancrofts' company in the same regiment. Among these men was still another Primus called Primus Osgood. He came, I believe, from Andover, but was enlisted in Middleton. He served three years, and then later returned to service undr Capt. Amos Lincoln on July 14, 1781, for a period of over fifteen months.

THE CIVIL WAR

Middleton sent some 115 men to service in the Civil War, of whom a few came from other towns to enlist there. The list of names has been published in a pamphlet compiled by Henry F. White, *Men of Middleton who enlisted in the Union Army, 1861-1865.* This may be consulted in the Flint Public Library or at the Middleton Historical Society. Sixteen of this number were killed in action or died in Confederate prisons and elsewhere before peace was declared. They were: Asa W. Brooks, Daniel W. Case, George F. Danforth, George S. Esty, Justin Flint, Charles H. Guilford, Joseph A. Guilford, Jr., Abishai Higgins, Charles Manning, George W. Peabody, Jeremiah Peabody, Joseph M. Richardson, Solomon Richardson, Henry A. Smith, Samuel O. Wilkins.

In this war for the first time women made a concerted effort to make and send relief supplies to the soldiers. They had regular meetings where bandages and other articles were prepared. The United States

Sanitary Commission published lists of things that were wanted. A paragraph from a local newspaper gives an idea of what was expected. It reads:

Every woman in the country can, at least, knit a pair of woolen stockings, or, if not, can purchase them. In each town let there be concert on this subject, taking care that three or four sizes are provided. —

DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLES MOST WANTED

Blankets for single beds.
Quilts, of cheap material, about seven feet long by fifty inches wide.
Knit woolen socks. Woolen or Canton flannel bed-gowns.
Wrappers, undershirts, and drawers.
Small hair and feather pillows and cushions for wounded limbs.
Slippers.

Delicacies for the sick — such as farina, arrow-root, cornstarch, cocoa, condensed milk, nicely dried fruit — can be advantageously distributed by the Commission. Jellies should be carefully prepared to avoid fermentation and most securely packed. Many articles of clothing have been injured in packages heretofore sent to the Commission, by the breaking of jars and bottles. Over every vessel containing jelly, strew white sugar to the depth of half an inch, and paste stout paper (not brandied) over the mouth.—Aromatic spirits and waters, light easy chairs for convalescents, nicely made splints for wounded limbs, chequer and backgammon boards, and like articles for the amusement of wounded men; books for desultory reading, and magazines, especially if illustrated, will be useful.

[Directions for packing and sending follow]

Caroline Stiles in her diaries[7] mentions these activities of the women and her part in them. She notes on November 6, 1861, that the "Ladies met at the Town Hall to knit for soldiers." On November 12, she began to "solicit for soldiers." A few days later she spent the day at her grandfather's knitting a comforter. On another occasion she and her sister Emily went to a neighbor's to "work on a quilt for the soldiers." The women sometimes met at the hall to make "lint" (scraped cotton), then used for wounds as absorbent cotton is today. Caroline mentions "spirited" war meetings, sessions of prayer for the soldiers, and a thanksgiving celebration and bonfire for Federal victories. In 1864 she notes a number of occasions when she worked with other women. On July 13, a ball was given for twelve young men who were just leaving for one hundred days service. We cannot doubt that the people at home did their full share in those trying times.

THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

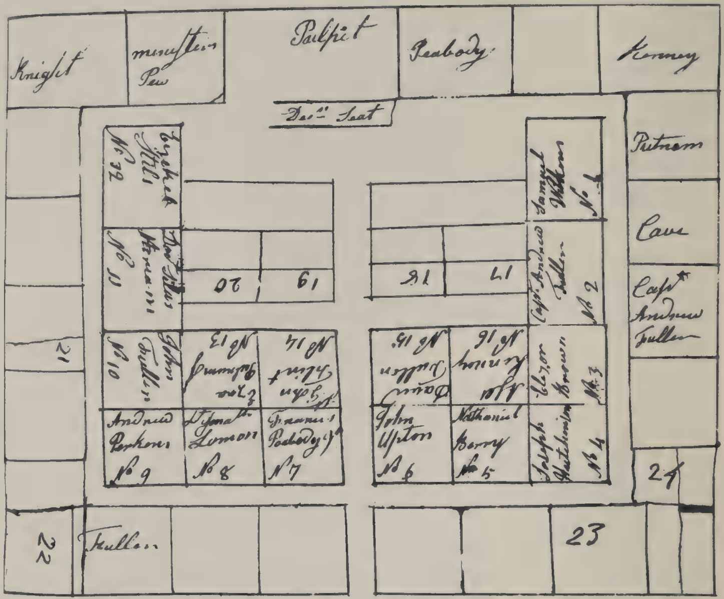
A number of Middleton men enlisted for the Spanish-American war, but their regiment did not see active service. Four of them — Willoughby P. Early, Charles P. Floyd, James J. Lee, and James H. Martin — were members of Company K, 8th Regiment, of Danvers, under Capt. A. Preston Chase. Other volunteers were Harry Van Iderstein, Ira Kitchin, and William W. Richardson.

FIRST AND SECOND WORLD WARS

The roll of honor for World War I shows the names of forty-three men. One of them, R.T. Murphy, made the supreme sacrifice. These men are memorialized by a tablet on the lawn of the Flint Public Library.

CHAPTER XII NOTES

1. Rev. John Cleaveland, "The Journal of the Rev. John Cleaveland," *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* XII, (April 1874).
2. Archelaus Fuller, "Journal of Col. Archelaus Fuller of Middleton, Mass., in the Expedition against Ticonderoga in 1758," *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* XLVI, (July 1910).
3. Published in "The Salem Evening News" during 1928.
4. George Peabody, *"Family Gatherings relating to the Smith and Blanchard Families,* Danvers, Massachusetts, 1929, p. 125.
5. *Danvers Historical Collections,* XVIII, XIX, and XX, 1930-1932.
6. George Peabody, *Family Gatherings,* p. 162.
7. Caroline A. (Stiles) Fletcher, *Diaries,* 1851-1914. In Middleton Historical Society.


Knight
minuſters Pew
Pulpit
Peabody
Kenney
Dea^ns Seat
Putnam
Cave
Capt Andrew Fuller
Ezekiel Hills No 12
Dea Silas Kenney No 11
20
19
18
17
Samuel Wilkins No 1
Capt Andrew Fuller No 2
John Fuller No 10
No 13 Ezra Putnam
No 14 John Flint
No 15 David Fuller
No 16 Wid Kenney
Widow Brown No 3
Andrew Perkins No 9
Jonath Lemon No 8
Francis Peabody Jr No 7
John Upton No 6
Nathaniel Berry No 5
Joseph Hutchinson No 4
21
22
Fuller
23
24

A Diagram of the Church in 1784. From the Town Records.

CHAPTER XIII

Middleton's Churches

THE MIDDLETON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Before the Middleton meetinghouse was built the nearest place of worship for those who lived at Will's Hill was the Salem Village church at what is now Danvers Center. This was a good three miles from Will's Hill, and almost the only way to get there was by horseback. In cold or stormy weather it was an ordeal to go so far to sit for several hours in an unheated building.

Even before Middleton was actually incorporated the inhabitants began their meetinghouse. However, it was not ready for use until more than a year after the first town meeting. In 1728 at a town meeting held on August 2, "The Town agreed that the seats in our meeting house should be [built in] the same maner as they are built in Salem Village meeting house." It may be explained that in early times there was no distinction between town and church; the same men administered both, taxing each householder for town, church, and school.

The first church building was erected on approximately the present site. It was a rude but stout structure, forty feet square, its heavy timbers covered with buttonwood planks. For many years the interior was plastered up the side walls only, leaving the braces and rafters exposed overhead. A gallery ran around three sides. One third of the front gallery was allotted for the women "to set in." Seats in the balcony were also provided for the singers and for the negro servants. The building had few and small windows and its first seats were mere benches of buttonwood with heavy joists for backs. In 1730 fourteen box pews were built against the walls and allotted after much dissension to those who had contributed most to the building and finishing of the meetinghouse.

To add to the discomforts of the house there was no heat whatever, except such as could be afforded by the little footstoves containing pans of coals that were carried by each family to meeting. No heating was installed until after December 1827, when the town voted a stove with a funnel and chimney for the meetinghouse. And yet, so intense was the flame of religious ardor among these sturdy settlers, they disregarded physical discomforts for the spiritual benefits they received while listening to the two-and-three-hour sermons of the early preachers. They also used their church for all town meetings, and they seem to have had a great sense of pride and proprietorship in it — even a feeling of affection. From the very beginning, the town records allude to it as "our" meetinghouse.

The ordination of Middleton's first minister, Rev. Andrew Peters, took place November 26, 1729. Ordinations were great occasions in those days. Ministers and notables from nearby towns and even from a distance came to celebrate the occasion. The clergy and "messengers" were entertained at the home of Jonathan Fuller on what is now Mount Vernon Street, and "scholars" at the house of Francis Elliot a short distance east of the church.

Andrew Peters was a Harvard graduate, son of Samuel Peters of Andover. At this time he was twenty-nine years old. It is told of him that he was a robust and muscular man, not at all a clerical type. His affair with Timothy Fuller, previously related, testifies to his physical prowess. Mr. Peters bought a house that had belonged to Dr. Daniel Felch and moved it to the land back of the meetinghouse. He acquired a sizeable farm, where he kept cows and sheep and lived upon its products like any other farmer. He spent the rest of his life in Middleton in a devoted and successful ministry. During his time more than 240 persons were added to the church membership. Strangely enough, Rev. Andrew Peters was finally laid to rest in Timothy Fuller's burying ground on Old South Main Street. This was on October 6, 1756. The quaintly carved stone may still be seen in the little cemetery — a shrine for members of the Middleton church.

After Mr. Peters' decease, the town managed to supply preachers by engaging various young ministers for short periods. They were most eager to have a young man who intended "to setel" in the work of the "ministre." September 11, 1758, they voted to have Mr. Elias Smith one month to preach on probation" and to have him stay in the town during that period. At the end of the month, Mr. Smith was invited to remain with them. The town fathers gave him a settlement of £160 and £65.13/4d. salary, which was later increased by more than six pounds. Immediately they laid plans for the ordination, which was an affair of great importance and dignity. Many "ministers, messengers, gentlemen, and "scholars" from out of town were to be present and places for their entertainment had to be provided. Some repairs on the meetinghouse were also needed. All expenses were paid by a tax laid on the town. The event took place January 10, 1759.

Rev. Elias Smith came from Reading. He was nearly twenty-nine and a graduate of Harvard in the class of 1753. Not long after his ordination he married Katherine Blanchard and raised a large family. In 1767 he bought from Jonathan Wilkins the old Thomas Fuller house and farm where Mrs. Harry Bradstreet formerly lived on Mount Vernon Street.

A short biography of Elias Smith recorded by his grandson George Peabody in 1851[1] tells us more about his life than we know of any other Middleton minister. It gives a picture of a well-rounded personality, of a man of mental power, intense activity, and a kindly nature. He was equally at home drinking a mug of cider and smoking a pipe with visiting clergy, sitting in at a trustees' meeting at Phillips Andover Academy, entertaining the young people of his church, or administering chastisement to the same offending neighbor who had aroused Mr. Peters. In church matters he was authoritarian; it was he who drew up the confession of faith and form for admission that was used for many years. Mr. Smith was the support of his people and shared with them the trials of the Revolutionary War. On May 14, 1775, he preached a sermon for the little group of young men who were leaving home for their country's service. Shortly afterwards, he followed to become their chaplain and again preached where they were encamped at Winter Hill in Somerville.

During the war he was in financial straits as a result of price inflation, his entire salary not being worth more than a month's living at that time. After a number of conferences, the town voted him £180, which was to be paid by the people either in money or its equivalent in a number of commodities — food, cloth, labor, wood, etc. — for which set prices were established. In this way each could give according to his ability. Some brought farm produce, others hauled wood from Mr. Smith's wood lot in Andover, or gave wood from their own land, while others worked his farm for him.

During Mr. Smith's pastorate 198 members were added to the Church of Christ, and the affairs of the parish were conducted strictly, but, in the light of those days, justly. In 1763 the town voted to repair the meetinghouse. At this time some changes were made that have been overlooked by previous recorders of the church history. A vote was passed "to shingel and claboard & glaise meeting hous with sash glais and plaster overhead." Deacon Samuel Symonds, Robert Bradford, and

Deacon Samuel Nichols were chosen to supervise this work, which was carried on during the summer. In October it was decided to "have the doors of the meeting hous moved all to the fore side . . . and turn the stairs." The gable ends of this square building were on the west and east. Mention is made at this early time of both west and east doors and of a "front" door, which a somewhat later diagram shows to have been on the south. When a tower was later added at the west end, the church faced towards what is now Webb Street (Maple Street was not then in existence and the main road was a continuation of King Street) and the west door then became the principal entrance.

In 1764 there was discussion of putting in new sills, but the project was vetoed, and this work was apparently never done until the whole building was renovated in 1802. In June 1764 the town reconsidered its plan for plastering overhead and the meetinghouse was not finished with a ceiling until a year later.

Meantime it seemed necessary to increase Mr. Smith's salary by sixteen pounds. A scheme was set in motion for raising this money by selling vacant spaces for pews. Deacon Symonds, Joseph Hobbs, and "Zorobable" (Zerubabel) Peabody were appointed to sell the spaces at the east and west ends of the meetinghouse "as Quick as may be dun." This they accomplished by holding a vendue or auction at Estey's Tavern. A vacancy for a pew at the east end was "struck of" to Capt. Andrew Fuller for ten pounds, ten shillings, and other spaces at the west end to John Flint and Stephen Elliott.

Pews in Colonial times were part of a man's property, to be handed down to his heirs or to be sold as he might please. However, one pewholder, Thomas Cave, was restrained from "coting (cutting) a winder out of his pue whare the old window was, he macking and maintaining the same on his own cost and charge forever." In spite of this decision, Jonathan Wilkins and Stephen Elliott were allowed in the following year to cut windows in their pews. Presumably their spaces backed against the outside wall, with its few, if any, openings, and they were seeking more light in the box-like enclosures where they sat.

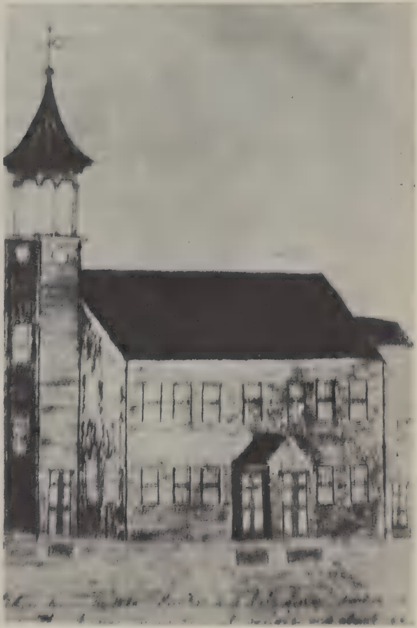
In 1769 the town voted to put "a wait on the west door of our meeting hous for to draw the door tu." Even in such small matters the town supervised church affairs. Such other provisions as allowing members of the congregation to sit in the school house next door on Sunday noon, or allocating special seats for the singers, were also regulated by the town. In this year a committee was chosen to "seat the meetinghouse." This occurred periodically. It was a custom of allotting seats according to taxes paid. With due regard to the comfort and convenience of older or deaf people, the best and most conspicuous seats were given to the wealthiest members and the rest of the congregation graded by the same standard. This procedure did not always give satisfaction to those who thought themselves entitled to better places. On more than one occasion in the early days they vented their wrath by entering the church at night and tearing down the seats. The colored servants, who were in fact slaves, were allowed to occupy the second rows of seats at the ends of the east and west galleries.

On November 25, 1783, the town voted to build from twelve to sixteen pews and to sell them at "publick vendue." John Upton, Capt. Andrew Fuller, and Capt. Benjamin Peabody were chosen as a committee "to move the Seats on the floor below & build the Pues." In this winter, also, it was voted "to Keep the west Dore of our meeting hous Shut During the Winter Season." The pews were ready by spring and were auctioned at the meetinghouse on April 25 and 26. A diagram drawn at this time in the town records and reproduced herewith shows this seating arrangement and the position of the high pulpit and the deacons' seat. The church no doubt looked very much like the Rocky Hill meetinghouse in Amesbury, which still retains its original pulpit, unpainted pews, and gallery around three sides.

Rev. Elias Smith passed away October 17, 1791, and was buried in the tomb on his own land which he and his son-in-law Joseph Peabody, a famous merchant of Salem, had prepared. This tomb and burial place, now surrounded by a fine stone wall, may be seen on Mount Vernon Street just south of the brook. Several members of the Smith family, as well as Mr. Smith's successor, Rev. Solomon Adams, are also buried there.

Mr. Adams was ordained at Middleton October 23, 1793, and was pastor until his death in 1813. In July of 1794 he married Miss Abilgail Fiske of Waltham. They made their home in the Elias Smith house, which Mr. Adams had purchased in the spring. In belief and practice Solomon Adams leaned towards Arminianism, or, in other words, Unitarianism. While he was minister the church ruled "that candidates for admission need not assent to the particular confession before used, they should only be required to assert their firm belief in the Holy Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice." The Middletonians, however, were essentially orthodox, and their disapproval of this kind of thinking is shown by the fact that only three persons joined the church during the last five years of Mr. Adams's ministry. Unfortunately, his health was not of the best, and towards the end of his life he became seriously disabled by a shock. He continued bravely to carry on the services, even when it became necessary for one of the deacons to read the sermon.

While Mr. Adams was pastor, Washington's birthday was celebrated



Middleton Congregational Church after renovation in 1802. From a sketch by David Stiles, Jr., made in 1870.
Courtesy of the Flint Public Library.

for the first time in our history. He was requested to give an oration in the church at eleven o'clock of that day in 1800. The militia, wearing badges of mourning, marched to his home and escorted him to and from the meetinghouse, where a solemn service of prayer and music preceded and followed the speaking.

During his time, also, the church was thoroughly renovated. The matter of new sills, brought up in town meeting nearly forty years earlier, now had to be attended to. This time they were placed on a hewn stone foundation and a new floor laid. A steeple seventy feet high was added on the west end, forming an entrance porch, and on the south a smaller porch with three doors protected the former "front" entrance. Two of the original doors, salvaged by John Fuller, Capt. Andrew's son, who was in charge of this construction, have been found in the cellar of the Fuller house, and are now in the possession of the Middleton Historical Society. New windows, forty-one in number, each with twenty-four panes, were installed. Inside, pews replaced the old seats in the body of the house, and a new pulpit and canopy were constructed. The pulpit and its sounding board were now painted — an innovation that was extended to the "pillors." The church was also painted outside for the first time. John Fuller had unfortunately proceeded without specifications from the town and went far beyond the appropriation. The losses that he suffered in consequence led him to further difficulties and eventually into selling his home to the incoming minister Rev. Ebenezer Hubbard. This is the house on King Street now owned by Mrs. Charles H. Watkins.

After the loss of Mr. Adams, the church was without a regular minister for three years. Then the town gave a call to a young man who had been a preacher in Newbury and occasionally in Ipswich. He was the son and namesake of Rev. Ebenezer Hubbard of Marblehead, where he was born in 1783. In 1805 he was graduated from Harvard. He was settled in Middleton November 27, 1816, at a salary of $500 a year. Mr. Hubbard, like his predecessor, showed liberal tendencies in his preaching. He is said to have been a pleasant speaker and at first was highly regarded, but the parish became mistrustful of one whose orthodoxy could be questioned. Gradually one person after another left the fold to attend other churches, where, as members, they could no longer be taxed to pay the minister's salary in Middleton. A crisis occurred when it became necessary to inform Mr. Hubbard that one half of the revenue of the church had been taken elsewhere and that the parish was no longer able to support him. In consequence, he was offered $500 and requested to ask for a dismission which he did on April 29, 1828. In his letter of resignation there is no trace of bitterness, but only the expression of a gentle Christian spirit. In his farewell address, however, Mr. Hubbard showed how deeply he had been hurt. "You would have plucked out your eyes and have given them to me," he gave as text. "Am I therefore become your enemy because I have told you the truth"[2]

In 1821, while Mr. Hubbard was the head of the church, a Sunday school was organized under the leadership of Solomon Adams, son of the former pastor.[3] This was not altogether successful after Mr. Adams left the town, but it was rejuvenated ten years later by Elijah C. Bridgman, a sudent at Andover, and later a missionary to China. The Sunday school has functioned continuously since that time.

Prayer meetings were another innovation that began about 1828.[4] For a long time they were held in private houses and were small assmblages not open to the public. There was no singing and but little speaking: they were prayer meetings in the literal sense. The first one was conducted in the home of David Stiles (later known as the Hiram Stiles house on Essex Street); the second was at the house of David S. Wilkins, just west of the Maple Street bridge.

After the departure of Mr. Hubbard, the Church of Christ in Middleton was again without a pastor, except for young men who came to supply the pulpit temporarily. In 1831 the church gave a call to Rev. Forrest Jefferds of Epping, New Hampshire, who preached for a number of Sundays while church and parish tried to come to an agreement about engaging him permanently. Mr. Jefferds was an evangelical preacher of the old school, who was acceptable to the majority, but a small group held out obstinately against him until a separation resulted. Deacon Peabody asked those who wanted evangelical preaching to withdraw to the southeast corner of the meetinghouse. Whereupon, he and forty-seven others gathered together and resolved to leave the old church. This meant the abandonment of the building where they and their ancestors had worshipped for a century, leaving behind the church furnishings, the communion service, the comfortable new stove, the Sunday school library, and all records and funds.

The petition to reorganize, dated December 16, 1831, reads: "The following inhabitants and members of the First Congregational parish and society, feeling that the state of things are such in said parish that we cannot enjoy ourselves within them, and worship God according to our conscience without dispute and altercation, and wishing to advocate peace, harmony, and brotherly love, wish to withdraw from said parish, not out of any ill will or envy, acting conscientiously what we believe our duty and form a new society hereafter to be designated Evangelical Congregational Society of Middleton."

The meeting of reorganization took place the afternoon of December

22nd at the house of Washington Berry (the old Andrew Fuller house where Mr. Hubbard had lived). All the male petitioners, thirty-eight in number, were present. At this and many subsequent meetings in the same house, officers and committees were chosen and plans made for building a new meetinghouse. A piece of land nearly opposite the junction of Maple and Mount Vernon Streets was purchased from Daniel Richardson for sixty-one dollars, and the contract for erecting the building was given to Jacob Dodge of Wenham.

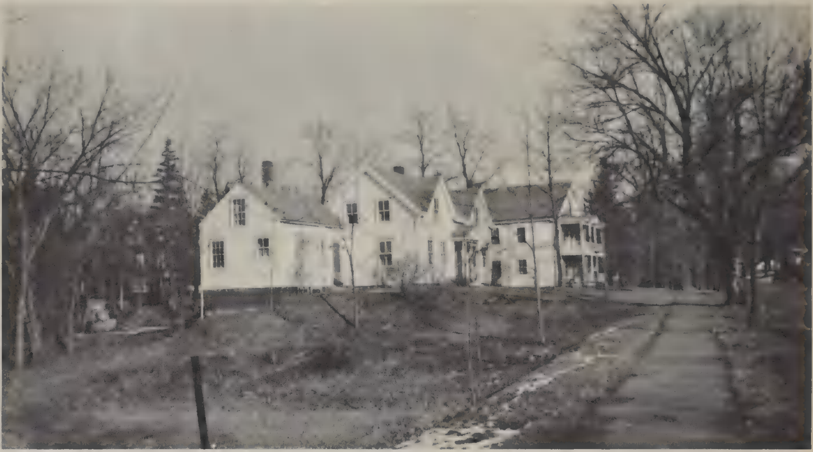
The entire cost of the church and its equipment was $2185.22. Only about $700 could be raised in Middleton; the rest was contributed by sympathetic churches in the surrounding towns. About half of the whole amount was raised by the enthusiastic efforts of Washington Berry. In a letter written December 1, 1832, he says:

"Since the first of March I have devoted over 110 days up to the first of December, soliciting and overseeing the work at the meetinghouse, and I have travelled over 558 miles out from home, besides what I travelled around the town to collect money."

It has been said that the new meetinghouse was ready when Mr. Jefferds was installed, but this is not borne out by the parish records. The small group who were left with the old church on their hands had tried to reorganize. At a meeting on April 26, they voted "That the Second society should have the meetinghouse one day in May 1832, for the purpose of installing Mr. Jefferds as their pastor." This small minority, expressing no ill feeling, deserves much sympathy. For a number of years they tried to hold together, but they were unable to raise enough money to pay a preacher or even to keep the old meetinghouse in repair. Later they organized as a Universalist society.

In 1841 they decided to demolish the building. This was done gradusually, beginning in the following year. It was voted that "the desk, pews on the floor and in the galleries, and the casing and flooring of the meetinghouse be taken out; and also the windows and that the steeple and eastern and front porches be taken down and carefully laid away within three weeks and that the body of the house that is left standing be sold if $300 can be obtained for it." No purchaser was found until 1846, when David Stiles, Jr., bought the structure for $60 and tore it down. Meantime, the small fittings of the church had been sold at auction. Some of this equipment and the records went back into the hands of the new society. The pewter communion service was acquired by Mr. Stiles.

The Evangelical Society held its business meeting in the new church for the first time, September 24, 1832. On this occasion the expenses of the venture were presented. Beside the bills for labor and materials,



Maple Street looking east, as it appeared c. 1850. The home of Samuel A. Fletcher in foreground. Building beyond was the Congregational Church which was converted to apartments in 1860.

there were such items as: a table and three chairs — $5.65; a set of church furniture — $27.29; Lamps — $25; a vane — $25; for luncheon on raising day — $3.98. Three years later $200 was raised by subscription to buy a bell, the first in town.

The ministry of Rev. Forrest Jefferds was eminently successful in getting the church back on its original basis and in reestablishing its former discipline. Mr. Jefferds was dismissed on May 15, 1844, with the good wishes of his parishioners.

It is impossible in this short account to relate in detail the story of each of the succeeding ministers. Many of them remained here merely for short periods; often they were students who filled in between those regularly installed. The following list includes every regular pastor with the dates of their terms.

Andrew Peters: Nov. 26, 1729 — Oct. 6, 1756.
Elias Smith: Jan. 10, 1759 — Sept. 17, 1791.
Solomon Adams: Oct. 23, 1793 — Sept. 4, 1813.
Ebenezer Hubbard: Nov. 27, 1816 — April 30, 1828.
Forrest Jefferds: May 2, 1832 — May 15, 1844.
Thurston Searle: May 8, 1845 — Dec. 23, 1846.
J. Augustine Hood: Jan. 2, 1850 — May 17, 1854.
A. H. Johnson: Jan. 1, 1857 — April 5, 1865.
James M. Hubbard: April 5, 1865 — Dec. 28, 1868.
Lucien H. Frary: Oct. 7, 1869 — March 16, 1875
A. H. Tyler: Oct. 24, 1877 — April 29, 1880.
Sidney K. B. Perkins: May 1883 — May 1887.
W. J. Murphy: Nov. 1, 1888 — Oct. 1, 1890.
Warren P. Landers: Dec. 2, 1891 — March 1, 1898.
Leslie C. Greeley: Dec. 20, 1898 — Nov. 2, 1905.
Elliot L. Moses: Nov. 13, 1906 — Aug. 1, 1908.
Dorall Lee: May 1, 1909 — Nov. 30, 1913.
Kingsley F. Norris: Aug. 1914 — Dec. 30, 1918.
H. A. G. Abbe: April 1, 1919 — Sept. 29, 1926.
E. H. Chandler: Sept. 6, 1928 — Sept. 1, 1931.
(Rev. Ralph Webb substituted for one year while Mr. Chandler had leave of absence.)
Wilmert H. Wolf: Nov. 1931 — March 1933.
John H. Knight: Sept. 1, 1933 — Sept. 12, 1936.
Adrian T. June: March 1, 1937 — March 1, 1941.
Albert A. Martin: June 15, 1941 — Before Aug. 1948.
Louis S. Thompson: Sept. 15, 1948 — Sept. 15, 1951.
Clarence A. Wood: March 9, 1952 — Dec. 31, 1955.
Frederick W. French: April 29, 1956 — Nov. 11, 1958.
A. Chandler Hadley: March 1, 1959 — June 18, 1962.
Richard F. Wilcox: Sept. 1, 1962 —

The building erected in 1832 served the society for twenty-eight years.

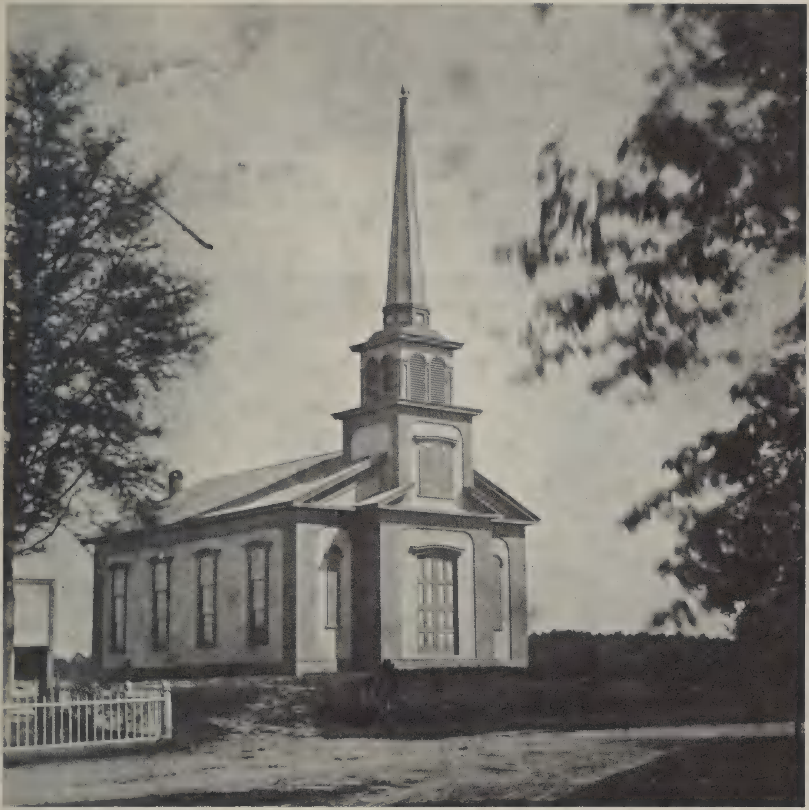
By that time the church was on a sounder financial basis and it had grown to the point where larger quarters were needed. The matter of enlarging and altering the meetinghouse was first brought up in 1856. Plans were considered to extend the building eighteen feet towards the road in order to accommodate sixteen additional pews; but further study led the parish to believe that it would be better to build a new church. David Stiles, Jr., Francis P. Merriam, and William A. Phelps were chosen as a committee to supervise the planning, raise money, and pay bills. They adopted specifications drawn by a Mr. Sargent. The site of the original early meetinghouse was selected as a location and the land purchased from the Universalist Society. The second church building was kept for a time for the use of the society, but was later sold to Samuel Peabody, who remodeled it as a dwelling. Still standing on Maple Street, it is now owned by the daughters of Hazen K. Richardson.

Substantial sums of money were given for the new church by George Peabody of Salem, a grandson of Elias Smith, by Francis Peabody, another grandson, and by Mrs. Gardiner of Boston. These contributions, with the money that could be raised locally, enabled the parish to pay the $5000 needed for their new place of worship. As a crowning touch, the committee was authorized to procure a bell, weighing not more than 1200 pounds. This was done and a bell, cast by Henry L. Hooper of Boston, noted metalworker, was hung in the steeple.

The new building was dedicated with appropriate services on November 30, 1859. It may be noted that Rev. A. H. Johnson was the pastor at the time. He was the first person to suggest that the organization of church and society might better be united in one form of government — the church.

During this era music played a very important part in the services and was greatly enjoyed. In 1867, A. A. Averill was asked to act as leader of the choir and Ansel P. Tyler as second leader and organist. Mr. Tyler held this position for some twenty-five years. Fifty dollars was allotted for "employing such musical instruction . . . as shall be for the best interests of the choir." That singing in the choir was no light matter is shown by the following resolutions: "Resolved, That . . . it is the duty of Members of the Choir to attend the rehearsals and meetings of the Choir and not merely to occupy seats with them on the Sabbath — and all persons who now occupy seats with the Choir and do not wish to comply with the above expressed wish of this Society and of the members of the Choir are requested to take seats below."

The society voted, April 5, 1869, to build a parsonage for the use of the minister in addition to his salary. Land for it on what is now Pleasant Street was given by Francis P. and James H. Merriam, and its



Middleton Congregational Church, built 1859,
from a photograph about 1870.

cost — $5000 — was raised partly by subscription, partly by a legacy of $500 from Miss Betsey Upton, and partly by loans. The parsonage was completed and ready for the pastor, Rev. Lucien H. Frary, at the time of his settlement in the following October. The house had neither plumbing nor central heating, but was doubtless the equal in that respect of other homes in the town.

In 1873 a trial was made of making the pews free and extending to all a public invitation to worship with the church. The exigencies of raising money, however, led to the abandonment of the system seven years later, when the pews were again sold at auction. Only a pew for the pastor and the two front pews reserved for the singers were excepted. The plan of selling pews was not given up permanently until 1914, when the weekly offering envelopes were introduced.

On November 29, 1874, a catastrophe occurred that was a discouraging setback to the society. In the words of William A. Phelps, parish clerk, "At about 6 o'clock this morning a fire was discovered inside our Meetinghouse by a passer by and an alarm was made which called the people together — who by their great efforts (without the aid of an Engine) subdued and finally extinguished it after great damage had been done to the Building and the furniture — the value of which is supposed to be from ten to fifteen hundred dollars." Mr. Phelps fails to add that the organ was entirely destroyed. Apparently there was no insurance to cover this loss, as the society at once set about raising money to pay the bills for repairs, and a three-year insurance policy was obtained in the following month. During the winter a course of lectures was instituted to help defray expenses. The repair work was not done until spring.

Meantime, Mr. Tyler, the organist, had gone about the business of soliciting funds to buy a new organ, and he was so successful that, in July 1875, he reported that the money was assured. An "instrument suited to the means of the people and the size of the church" was purchased from George H. Ryder, an organ builder of Boston, at a cost of about $1500. George Peabody again came to the assistance of the little parish, giving $500 towards the organ and the necessary repairs. The gratitude of the church to Mr. Tyler for his efforts and to Mr. Averill for his leadership in the choir were unbounded. It was now voted that "E. B. Wilkins be a committee to invite former members of the Choir to take seats near the Organ for the purpose of leading the Congregation in the musical part of their worship."

During the next few years the parish fell on bad days, when they had "unpleasantness" of their own making with their minister and when they could not concur with the church in choosing another. For three years they were without a leader and were even obliged to go outside the town for the services of a clergyman to officiate at funerals. This came to an end with the arrival of Rev. Sidney K. B. Perkins. One reason for such a state was that so small a parish had great difficulty in paying a regular preacher enough for his living.

Not until 1885 is there any mention of women taking an active part in the church government, and no woman held office until 1901, when Mrs. A. A. Averill was made co-treasurer with her husband. In that year, also, two women, Mrs. Susie E. Wilkins and Mrs. A. P. Tyler, were added to the parish committee. Nevertheless, the women were doing their part. In March 1885, the Ladies' Home Union was given a vote of thanks for presenting a chandelier to the church and for putting town water in the parsonage. The minister's house was completely renovated a few years later and improvements made on the grounds and outbuildings, including a fence. The house was further improved with more modern plumbing and heating in 1913, thanks to a gift of $500 for the purpose from Deacon Edward W. Wilkins. For a number of years prior to 1932 there was talk about selling the parsonage and even an attempt to do so, but eventually it proved to be self-supporting through rental, and it still remains.

In 1889 the Ladies' Home Union spent about $600 on the meetinghouse "giving it a comfortable and very pleasant effect." An important addition at this time was a hot-air furnace. David Stiles, Jr., also made a personal gift of a clock.

As late as 1928 there were sheds for the protection of horses and carriages on Webb Street west of the church. When these got out of repair at one time, it was discovered that they were privately owned and that the owners were responsible for their upkeep. In 1915 four new sheds were built by the parish back of the church.

In 1913 the church was wired for electricity. Up to that time it had been lighted by whale-oil and then kerosene lamps.

One of the most important events in the history of the 1859 meetinghouse occurred in 1933, when it was raised four feet in order to accommodate a vestry under the auditorium. After many discussions of plans and the appointment of numerous committees to supervise parts of the work, the project went forward. The finishing touches were not put on until the summer of 1934. In 1936 the parish spent $1000 to install a steam heating plant for the entire building and to have the ceiling made fireproof. With the addition of a kitchen and water in the vestry, the church had by then reached practically its present status.

An event of great importance in a less material way was the change in the church organization, November 28, 1950, when the Evangelical Congregational Society was dissolved and the church was united in one as the Middleton Congregational Church.

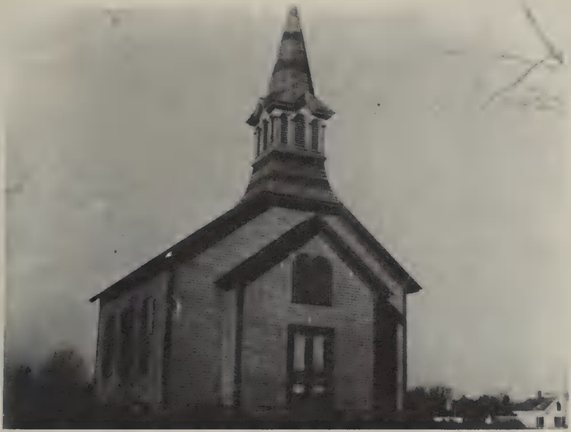
In June 1953, when Mr. Wood was pastor, one of the most forward steps for the future of the church was achieved when almost $60,000 was raised in order to erect an addition for religious education and activities and to redecorate the building. This project was brought to completion during the incumbency of Mr. French. An extension at the north end of the church and a modernization of the vestry have made possible the many activities that are now carried on so successfully to the benefit of the Congregational Society.

THE FIRST UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY

The organization of a Universalist Society in Middleton grew out of the split in the Congregational Church recounted in the previous section. In 1831, before the actual break, the church and parish clashed on the question of evangelical or orthodox preaching and whether its exponent, Rev. Forrest Jefferds, should be given a call to preach in the church. Twice the question was dismissed. As a result the greater number of members left the church in order to reorganize and to erect a new building, while a small minority was left with the original meetinghouse and its fittings on their hands. With small resources, they were of course unable to hire a preacher or to take care of the church building. They made a valiant effort to do so. In fact, they were still thinking up ways and means of repairing the meetinghouse ten years after it had been left to them.

In July 1837 this group voted that they should be called the first Universalist Society in Middleton. A constitution was drawn up by Alfred A. Averill expressing their objectives and incorporating the name. By 1841 they agreed that it was inexpedient to try to repair or alter the meetinghouse and they voted to take it down. They realized a small sum by selling the pews, and then proceeded to remove the other furnishings, the interior woodwork and floors, and to take down the steeple and the eastern porch. They hoped to get $300 for the stripped building, but were eventually obliged to turn it over for sixty dollars to David Stiles, who tore it down.

The Universalist Society ascertained that they still had title to the land and they proposed by selling shares and by using what they had obtained from the sale of the building and its contents to erect a new meetinghouse upon it. This was soon seen to be an impossibility. From 1846 to 1884 they met, first at the Centre School and then in the Town Hall. In 1859 they deeded the land with the stone foundation to the Congregationalists as a site for their new church.



Universalist Church, Boston Street. Built 1884. Sold 1908.

The Universalist Society raised money by subscription to pay the various ministers who came to preach to them. The records indicate that they had services only twenty Sundays in the year. In 1874 they spent $110 for an organ. This proved useful, not only for their own meetings, but also as a means of raising money by occasional rentals. At this time the society had about fifty members, and was apparently becoming more active and prosperous. They were beginning to think about having a small church of their own. This was first proposed in the spring of 1883. On May 28 they authorized a committee "to measure and locate and purchase a parcel of land owned by J. J. Grothe and a parcel of land owned by Mrs. Hannah A. Esty and to pay for the same." These lots were on Boston Street east of the corner of Pleasant Street.

This first Universalist Church, which was always referred to as a chapel, cost just under $1500. The treasurer's records show that S. E. McGlauflin built the cellar wall, Isaac R. Gates did the major work of construction, George B. Flint carried out the masonry work, T. Sylvester Trask of Danvers the painting, while several others graded the grounds. Plans for a dedication program were left to Mr. Sanger, the minister, by a vote December 18, 1884. Just when this ceremony took place is not recorded. The treasurer notes that the church was opened for regular services on November 5, 1886, with Rev. W. S. Williams officiating.

Now that the First Universalist Parish and Society had attained its long-wished-for objective — a meeting place of its own — all interest in the organization seems to have faded away. Although they had a few sociables and entertainments for raising money, such funds as they had dwindled rapidly. They paid the minimum for preaching — sometimes but thirty-five or fifty dollars a year. There was a brief resurgence of activity in 1890, when by various means, and with contributions from the Ladies' Aid Society and other groups, they managed to get together $295.38. Out of this they paid $271.62 for the preacher and his expenses and $9.50 for repairing the furnace, with a few other small sums, leaving only $4.01 in the treasury. The last recorded item of expense, in May 1892, reads: "Paid towards having the organ repaired $4.01 leaving the treasury empty." Susan C. Peabody, the treasurer, then added, "Services have been held occasionally without expense to the society."

This sudden cessation of responsibility can only be explained by the fact that many of the earlier members had died and that the younger ones were withdrawing from the society. They still had title to an inactive church. When it was finally sold in 1908, a note was made that no regular services had been held there for seventeen years.

Several efforts were made to dispose of the chapel. It was offered for rental to an athletic association, if they would make necessary repairs.

This offer not being accepted, a plan was made to convey it to E. J. Helms of Boston for charitable work connected with the Morgan Memorial, but only on condition that he could obtain the Methodist Church for the same purpose. As the Methodists did not comply with this arrangement, the Universalists offered the church property to the King's Daughters of Essex County to be used as a home for aged persons. The King's Daughters replied politely that they were unable to maintain such a charity. The treasurer, accordingly, was authorized to sell the chapel after the settees and other furnishings had been given to the remaining members. On July 29, 1908, a deed of the land and buildings (1930-447) was given to Willis W. Esty of Brookline in return for "One Dollar and other valuable considerations." These unspecified considerations apparently did have some money value, as the treasurer recorded in August that $450 had been realized from the sale of the church property. With some other funds, the assets of the society, to the amount of more than $630, were then transferred to the First Universalist Church of Danvers, and a donation of $100 was made to the Congregational Church in Middleton.

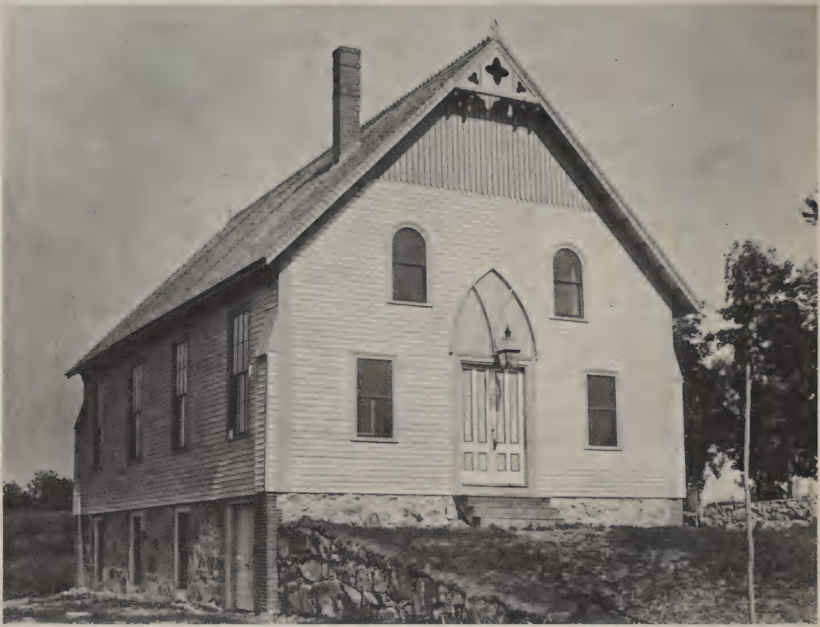
In 1920 Henry F. White, as last surviving member of the last standing committee, turned over the church records to the town officials to be deposited with other town records. They are now (1968) in the possession of the Flint Public Library.

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Methodist Church began informally in April 1878, when its first pastor, Rev. E. R. Watson, preached to a small group in the Town Hall. It organized as a church in March of the following year with only nine members. Within three years, however, the Methodists had a church of their own. They put up their building on a small lot of land which they bought of Francis P. Merriam. It stood just north of the Merriam cemetery on South Main Street, where, in altered form, it may still be seen.

This church was dedicated by Bishop Foster on January 6, 1881, while Rev. S. E. Breen was pastor. Caroline (Stiles) Fletcher noted in her diary, January 7, "At the Methodist Chapel yesterday $1440 was raised." This must have paid for their church building with something to spare. The Congregational Society helped out with a gift of pulpit furniture and pews formerly used in their church.

In contrast to the almost private atmosphere of the Universalist Society, the Methodists, during their twenty years of existence, had a great deal of social activity. There are records of many church suppers and sociables, lawn parties, picnics, and sleighrides, musical entertainments,



Methodist Church, South Main Street. 1881 - 1907.

readings, children's concerts, and Christmas parties. Some of these affairs were conducted by the Ladies' Aid Society and some by the Epworth League, the young people's society that corresponded to the Christian Endeavor in the Congregational Church. With such an atmosphere of friendliness, it is a little difficult to understand why the Methodists, who were active enough up to 1900, should have disbanded so soon after the turn of the century.

Their church was for sale in 1906 and was actually disposed of December 11, 1907. On that date the trustees conveyed it to Willoughby P. Early (1900-427). Mr. Early turned the building around so that it was sidewise to the street and proceeded to remodel it into a two-family dwelling, which he rented. In the 1920's the house was purchased by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar V. Johnson.

The following list of pastors is taken from a booklet published by the church in 1896:

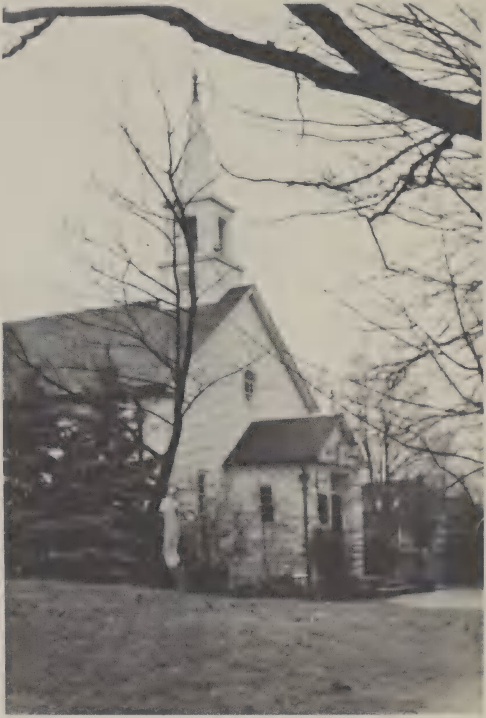
E. R. Watson, Sept. 13, 1878
S. W. Brown, April 13, 1879
S. E. Breen, April 18, 1880
E. N. Kirby, April 25, 1881
J. Jackson, Sept. 18, 1883
James F. Docking, Sept. 20, 1884
O. C. Poland, April 19, 1886
E. O. Mather, July 14, 1888
Henry Pearce, June 10, 1889
Harman J. Hoover, April 20, 1890
William J. Pyle, May 1, 1891
Benj. P. White, April 21, 1892
Robert Crawford, April 22, 1893
Thos. E. Chandler, Sept. 9, 1893
Francis B. Harvey, Sept. 28, 1894
Ernest B. Lavalette, April 13, 1896
Parren U. Hawkins, Nov. 20, 1896

ST. AGNES PARISH

The parish of St. Agnes was separated from the Annunciation parish in Danvers in December 1945, and Rev. James E. Welch came to Middleton at that time to take up his duties as pastor. Ever since 1936, when the sons and daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Cronin made a gift of land on Boston Street for the purpose, the Middleton Catholics had looked forward to having a church of their own. With the gift of a parish house and land, this now became a reality.

St. Agnes Church was built during the pastorate of Rev. Joseph H. Bernard, and was dedicated on April 17, 1948, with Archbishop, later Cardinal, Richard J. Cushing presiding. He returned two years later to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to a class of twenty-five boys, twenty-seven girls, and five adults. This was the first class in the new church. At this time Rev. John J. Quinlan was serving as pastor from June 1949 to February 1951. The fourth pastor was Rev. John H. Powers.

On March 1, 1954, St. Agnes parish had a re-union under the leadership of their pastor Llewellyn D. Chadbourne, assisted by a large com-



276 St. Agnes Church, Boston Street. Built in 1948.

mittee with Daniel J. Donovan as chairman. An elaborate program was presented by the choir under the direction of Miss Lillian Richardson, speeches were made by former pastors, and movies and a variety show enlivened the occasion.

Father Chadbourne remained in Middleton until 1956, when he was succeeded by Rev. Charles De Coursey, who was the incumbent for the two following years. Father Paul Donahue came to St. Agnes in 1958 and is the present pastor. In 1961 it was thought advisable to have a curate as assistant. Rev. Frederick Walsh for four years filled this position, which was later held by Rev. Richard Shmaruk.

CHAPTER XIII NOTES

1. George Peabody, *Family Gatherings relating to the Smith and Blanchard Families with Memoir of the Rev. Elias Smith,* Danvers, 1929.
2. Church records.
3. Address by Rev. A. H. Tyler on occasion of the 150th anniversary of the church, October 26, 1879.
4. Ibid.

CHAPTER XIV

The District Schoolhouses

Middleton's charter in 1728 required the newly formed town to build a meetinghouse and to procure a schoolmaster to teach reading and writing. The first teacher was Nathaniel Town, who retained the position until 1738, when Timothy Fuller succeeded him for a time. The records do not reveal whether the town provided a building thus early. The money appropriated was to "support" a school: that is, to pay the teacher's stipend and the cost of firewood.

There is record of at least one schoolhouse, so called, before 1750. This occurs in a sale of fifty-eight acres with house and barn from Oliver Andrews to John Elliot on January 31, 1748/9, which stipulated that "the School House standing on the sd Farm is not sold by this Deed." This was the old Nathaniel Carrell farm near Maple Street and the River Bridge that was settled in the early 1700's. Until 1728 the property was in Boxford. It is quite possible that the school was a neighborhood affair for the children of a few families distant from the meetinghouse, and not under control of the town.

Two other schoolhouses of later period seem to have had the same private character. One stood on the land of Samuel Wilkins at the time of his death in 1803. It is mentioned in the settlement of his estate as being on a twenty-five-acre tract west of his home on Liberty Street. A third building of undetermined date was on the farm now owned by Dr. Audrey Bill on Essex Street. After being used as a school, it was converted into a carriage house and then moved away to be made over as a dwelling house on Washington Street. In the 1880's it was occupied by A. E. Coleman.

The town records first mention a school building in 1758, and it, too, was privately owned. The fact that it was then called an old schoolhouse shows that it had been in use for some years — perhaps from the beginning. In 1758, Middleton, like some of the surrounding towns, was under the burden of supporting a French family brought here from Nova Scotia during the French and Indian Wars. To do this cost the town twenty pounds a year — twice as much as they had been spending on their school. In consequence, a vote was taken in town meeting "to see if the town will fit up the old scoole house for the French family to dwel in." This measure did not go through, nor did the proposal to "Build a School hous in sum comvenient place where it will serve the Town best."

On June 15, 1762, the town voted "to repare the old schol hous which stands by our meeting house provided the proprietors of said hous give said hous to said town." In 1770 the town voted down the plan to have the "writing and Scifring Schools Stationed at the School hous by the meeting house," and also vetoed the proposal to have the building moved nearer to the center of the town. In March of the following year they further disapproved of the idea of having two schoolhouses, one near Lieutenant Hobbses (East Street) and one near Lieutenant Samuel Berry's (School and Essex Streets), while moving the old schoolhouse down near Capt. Archelaus Fuller's (South Main Street). This was the first move towards districting, which, however, was not accomplished until nearly forty years later.

According to the pattern of Middleton town meetings, the day of decision was always postponed. On January 10, 1775, they moved *not* to move the school. By this time, after suffering the misfortunes of war, they were not in a position to spend any money at all. In the year 1778, after voting $300, which apparently they were unable to raise, Middleton got along without a school. Under date of June 29, 1779, the Inferior Court of Common Pleas to be held in Salem on July second, called on the town "to show cause why they refuse to keep a School as the law Directs." Ephraim Fuller was chosen "to go to court and prevent if possible the town's paying a fine for not keeping a school for the year 1778." This he was unable to do.

The town tried valiantly to make amends. On August 23 they appropriated five hundred pounds for the support of a school and a week later they voted to raise the one hundred and thirty pounds of their fine. The business of schoolhouses was approached seriously. It was decided to "have school keep in four parts of the town," and a committee of five was appointed to provide plans and a schoolmaster. Actually nothing came of all this. In 1782 the teacher, one Capt. David Jenkins, was given six dollars more in "hard money" than he had reecived in 1778, but extra schoolhouses were not forthcoming. Every effort toward new building was dismissed or voted down. In 1785 a committee was again chosen to divide the town for schools, and in 1790 a vote was passed to build four schools. The measure was revised to read "Build two new schools and move the old School house to some proper place." There must have been a great deal of argument and opposition in the town meetings, which resulted in nothing more than getting through a motion to repair the old schoolhouse. At last, on May 10, 1796, they voted "to Seall the School house near the Meeting house," the purchaser to move the building away. At this point the meeting changed its mind and voted "Not Seall the Schoolhouse today." As a final retrogressive measure Middleton decided in 1801 not to divide the town into districts.

Such a division was not finally approved until May 7, 1807, many years after it was originally proposed. In 1808 the town clerk made a list of the houses and taxpayers in each district and the bounds of each division.

The north district contained thirty-two houses and, roughly speaking, included those who lived on Forest and Essex Streets, and on Liberty Street north of Pout Pond Brook.

The south district, of thirty-five taxpayers, took in South Main, River and Boston Streets, Lake, Maple, and King Streets, and Liberty south of the brook.

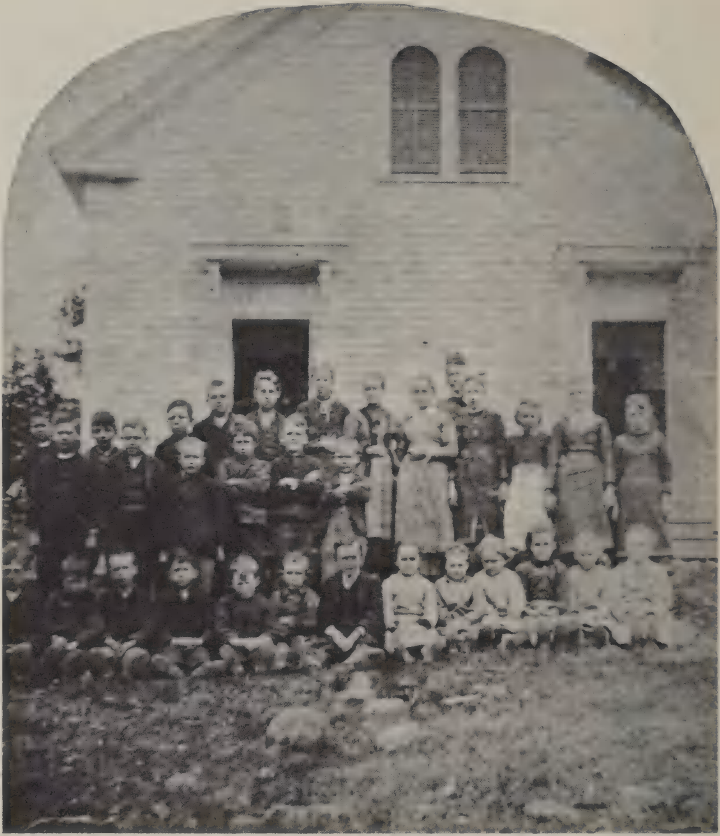
The east district was made up of thirty-nine residents of Maple Street east of the Ipswich River, and those who lived on East, Locust, and Peabody Streets.

These divisions, with another added later, were kept until it became necessary in the 1850's to grade the school system. In May 1826, in accordance with an act of the General Court, the whole system was placed in the hands of one committee of five instead of the district committees.

Now at long last the town moved away the old school by the meeting house. A note in the account book of Benjamin Peabody shows that it belonged to John Fuller.[1] Peabody billed him for labor January 2, 1810: "to myself & oxen & chains one Brock (broke?) a halling his School house to Danvers one day — $1.50. This became the first public school in Danvers Plains. It was set up in 1816 by Ezra Batchelder, Sr., a blacksmith, and others who had "bought a small building in Middleton and moved it to the plains for school purposes."[2]

THE NORTH SCHOOL

Since at one time the town had chosen to divide itself into north and south districts and later, in 1804, into east and west, there is some doubt as to the dates when the outlying schoolhouses were built. The North



North School, Essex Street, in 1875.
The new building with pupils of all ages.

School was probably the first one erected, at the time when the old one by the meetinghouse was still doing duty as the south. No records of the north building have been found. It is mentioned in a land record in 1825, and a town record of 1832 refers to "the road from Widow Betty Wilkins to the Country road near the Brick school house." This road was the present School Street, and the school stood just north of its juncture with Essex Street. That it was built of brick at a period when there was no other brick building in town is not a little astonishing. Whether its bricks were locally made is a question. Near Betty Wilkins's land was a tract known as the "clay pits," but no mention of brickmaking has been found in local records.

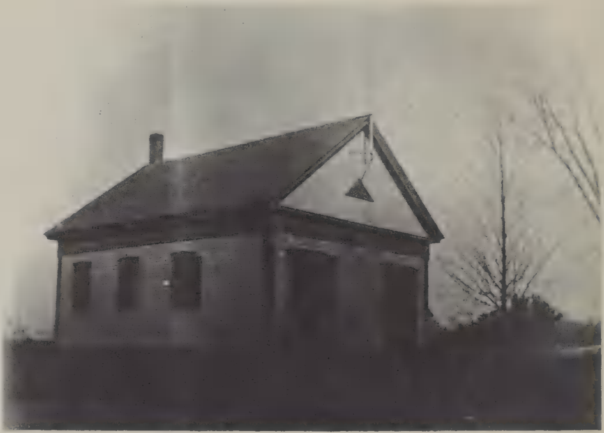
This building must be considered a superior structure of its kind, almost unique among district schools in Essex County. It was used evenings for other public purposes. Caroline Fletcher in her diaries[3] speaks of attending prayer meetings and choir meetings at the brick schoolhouse.

The old building was torn down in 1872 and a new wooden house put up in its stead. The cost of $2,330.66 was somewhat reduced by the sale of the old bricks for eighty-one dollars. Milton J. Emerson, who ran the sawmill near Forest Street, drew up the plans and specifications and provided some of the labor. William A. and Horace D. Phelps, carpenters, received about $1800 of the total amount expended. Others were paid for lumber, masonry work, and labor. New school furniture was purchased of W. O. Haskell & Son at a cost of $235. In the town's incidental expenses for the following year were lumber and labor for a fence and a privy, probably for this same school, and settees, so specified. A clock and bell purchased at the same time were possibly fittings for the North School.

The late Mrs. Walter S. Flint of Beverly (Etta Terrio) attended this North School when it was first built. She said that the chimney for the stove was not based on the floor, but was hung on the rafters, and that a platform for the teacher's desk stood at the end opposite the door. The only indication of the outward appearance of this building is a stereoscopic view showing separate entry doors for boys and girls and arched windows typical of the period. Arched windows were also built into the Centre School when it was enlarged in the same year.

THE EAST SCHOOL

In all probability the East School always stood on the location first proposed in 1770 near Lieut. Joseph Hobb's house: that is to say, on East Street just south of Locust. The Hobbses lived on Locust Street around the corner. The first building was perhaps erected as early as 1790, when



284 East District School, East Street. Probably built about 1860.

the town voted to build two new schoolhouses and to move their old one.

An incomplete description of the East School dated January 6, 1837, was written by Elizabeth Daniels when she was nineteen years of age. She later became Mrs. Timothy Wilkins and was the great-grandmother of Roger Peabody, a resident of Middleton. It reads:

> Jan. 6th, 1837
>
> This house was bilt in the year 1820,. It is pleasantly sciscuted on a large plain in the eastern part of Middleton. It is surrounded with a high stone wall. And there was formerly a large tree in front, which afforded an agreeable shade in the summer season. This house twenty-four feet in weath twenty-two feet in length nine feet and a half high and it contains eight windows with twenty squares of glass in each. There were thirty-two benches but four of them are now entirely destroyed the remainder badly woundded. In the back part of the house is the remains of a desk for the acomodation of the teacher. In the center is a large hearth on which there —

This obviously describes a second building. Any record of its erection is lost along with the minutes of the east district meetings. The only memento of this 1820 schoolhouse is the low bench that went across one end of the room, now in the possession of the Middleton Historical Society. It is of plain unpainted pine.

The schoolhouse shown on page 284 was built around or before 1860 It has since been rebuilt on a slightly different location for a dwelling house and is presently occupied by Benjamin Ogden. In 1854 the town expended one hundred dollars to purchase an additional piece of land for the schoolyard and for building a fence and setting out trees.

THE SOUTH OR CENTRE SCHOOL

The complete records of the south district meetings have fortunately been preserved and are in the custody of the town clerk. They show carefully conducted proceedings on the exact lines of a town meeting. The district chairman issued a warrant and all members of the district were eligible to attend and to vote on all questions.

The first meeting was held on April 6, 1808, at the house of Mr. John Estey — the old Estey Tavern in the square — at three o'clock in the afternoon. Three men — Daniel Fuller, Stephen Richardson, and Jeremiah Flint — were appointed as the committee for the south district. They were empowered to select a location for the schoolhouse "any ware between the Elewive brook Near Doct Merriams and Doct Fullers house that was formerly Jacob Fullers Decd." The Fuller house was the present home of the Misses Lillian and Helen Richardson on South Main Street, and Dr. Merriam lived at the corner of Main and Maple Streets across from the tavern. In response to a report from the committee, it was voted "youanimously", April 12, "to Except of the spot of land in the southwest corner of Doct Merriams paster." It was also agreed to buy this piece of land, four rods square, paying Dr. Merriam twenty-five dollars. The lot was opposite the entrance of Boston Street, where Memorial Hall stands today.

At this meeting the district proceeded immediately to business. They voted, thirdly, to have a "schoolhouse 26 feet long & 24 feet wide hiped Roof with a Gallery and porch agreeable to the plan presented by the Committee., Fourthly, it was voted "to have a stove in said District schoolhouse." This antedated the stove in the meetinghouse by eighteen years. A stove approved for the North School in 1827 may have been a replacement.

The meeting next voted to "underpin said schoolhouse with huwen and split stones." Lastly, they moved to raise four hundred dollars to pay for the building, the work to be let out to the lowest bidder.

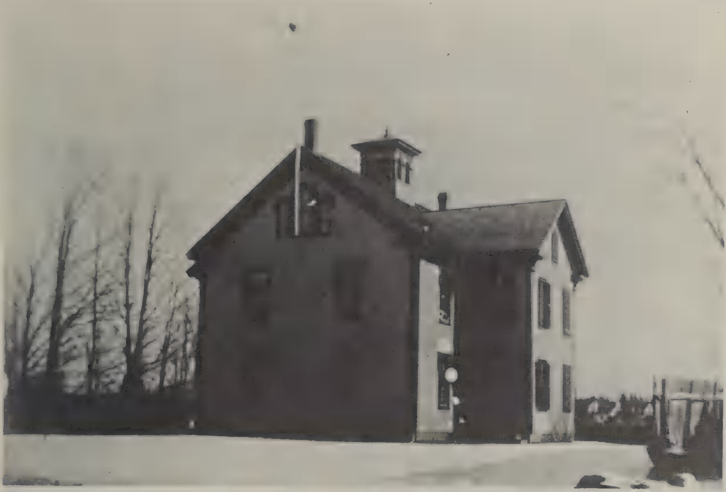
On May 4, 1808, the entire meeting was devoted to the matter of painting the schoolhouse. After agreeing that it should be painted, they decided "to paint the Roof and the Back side with Spanish Brown," and "to have the Remainder part of the schoolhouse painted with green or a lite Collour or Straw Coller."

This vision of a school building with a hipped roof and a gallery painted reddish brown combined with green or straw color is not exactly what comes to mind when we think of an old district school. It is unfortunate that it disappeared before the era of photography. Its cost proved to be somewhat higher than expected and a further $120 had to be raised.

By 1837 this building had to be replaced. Its successor departed still more from the traditional type. The decision to build it was made at a meeting, January 4, 1837. A committee of three — Jeremiah Richardson, Daniel Fuller, Esq., and Solomon Wilkins — was chosen "to view and bring a plan for said house." The only other action taken was a vote to have a "square ruff."

In a second meeting, January 21, twenty items were voted on and settled by those present. Since the original text is far more interesting than any comment could make it, it is here given in full:

1 Voted to have the entry way 5 feet
2 Voted to have 8 by 10 glass and have 20 square in a window
3 Voted to have 11 foot post
4 Voted to have the house arched over head as the committee direct



Centre School as it looked in 1860. Photograph 1895.

5 Voted to have spard ruff (i.e., of spars, or rafters)
6 Voted that the pitch of the ruff be a common pitch
7 Voted to have hemlock boards for the ruff
8 Voted to have the boards on the side and ends matched
9 Voted to have the house sealled as high as the windows
10 Voted to have two ourter doors
11 Voted to have boxes and leds
12 Voted to have the floor rise six inches in the back side where the seats sets.
13 Voted to have a necessary bilt 5 feet by 6
14 Voted to have the west end of the house finished simerly to F. Jeffords house is
15 Voted to have the house painted with two cots of paint one cot to be put on immediately after the house is done and the other to be put on in the fall
16 Voted to have the house finished by the tenth of may next except one cot of paint
17 Voted that the committee git the house insured
18 Voted to have the house painted light pea green and the trimmings wight the dors to be painted a fancy or modern collar
19 Voted to have the inside finished with merchantable stuff
20 Voted to have a committee of three to receive proposals and contract for the house and see that it is don according to contract. (Daniel Fuller, Jeremiah Richardson, and Ephraim Fuller, Com.)
Feb. 4, 1837 — Voted contract to Hall & Briggs (Salem) — ("Joseph E. Hawl and Mr. Birgs") — $632.75
Feb. 18th 1837 — Voted to Raise $700 to bild a schoolhouse in the South District so called

Until 1860 the old-time district school system prevailed: that is, every teacher was obliged to instruct children of all ages and grades in her one school or room. The South or Centre School was still running on this plan in March 1855, when an unsually diligent school committee reported not only on its scholastic record, but on its physical condition as well. In the preceding year $1,300 had been expended to buy more land, to add to and completely repair the buiding, at the same time removing part of it and to provide new furniture. In the words of the report: "The District has now a yard containing more than a quarter of an acre, beside what the house now stands upon, enclosed by a tight board fence." It goes on to say:

An addition to the house, giving two separate entries, one for each sex, of six feet in width, and supplied with clothes hooks; a room of fifteen by twenty feet, nearly, used for a recitation and play room, in which all the scholars may assemble at intermission between school hours; and an addition to the original schoolroom of five feet in length, which, by taking in the room formerly occupied by the entries, gives a schoolroom thirty-four by twenty-four feet, nearly. This has been furnished with new windows hung with weights, new hard pine floor, and platforms, and new plastering; new seats and desks, grained and varnished and supplied with inkstands; a teacher's table, clock, a ventilating stove, and more than fifty square feet of blackboard. A chimney, with its foundations resting on the ground, between the two rooms, is supplied with two ventilating aperrures for the main room — one near the floor, and the other, which is supplied with an air register, near the top of the room. One of Emerson's Patent Ventilators also surmounts the roof, over this room, which communicates with it by means of a trap that is controlled by a cord, at the teacher's platform.

There is also a basement that answers for a wood room. Two privies have also been provided, and located about eight feet apart in the fence on the northerly end of the schoolhouse, about twenty feet from it. These are isolated by a light board fence that separates the yard in that quarter. The house has been well painted, and furnished with blinds, except the windows on the Northerly end.

In this school the vitally important object of Ventilation has been fully attained. This fact can be attested by the large number of visitors present at the closing examination, by whom, and the scholars, the room was fully packed, but yet who, by no sign, expressed any of that oppression, uneasiness, and restlessness, that are the sure accompaniment of crowded ill ventilated rooms. In both the other schoolhouses, the committee and visitors at the closing examination, were most uncomforably reminded of a different state of things in this respect. In both of them the ceiling is low and no provision is made for ventilation, except by the windows, which let down from the top. Although this mode is an improvement on that of raising the lower sash, yet at times it is liable to the same objection, viz: — that of admitting currents of air upon the perspiring bodies within, to their great discomfort and danger. But this great evil can be easily and cheaply remedied, by means of surmounting each of these houses by one of "Emerson's Ventilators," at a trifling cost, not exceeding twenty-five dollars. It is to be hoped that for the sake of those little ones who suffer without knowing why, and who are dependent upon parents and guardians to protect them from danger and death, that another school term may not pass until this evil is remedied.

In spite of the improvements described in this report, the old building was soon found inadequate. At a meeting on March 13, 1860, with little preliminary discussion, the district voted to build a new schoolhouse which should be two stories high and accommodate one hundred and fifty scholars. James N. Merriam was appointed a committee of one. In April $2,500 was appropriated for the purpose and a decision was made to sell the old building at auction before the new one was begun. The furnishings were also to be disposed of, except for whatever the committee might think could still be used. Merriam was given discretionary power over the whole project.

The schoolhouse was completed during the summer of 1860 and dedicated on September 7 with prayer and singing and addresses by J. D. Philbrick, Esq., and others. It was an occasion for rejoicing. In the words of a chorus chanted by the children:

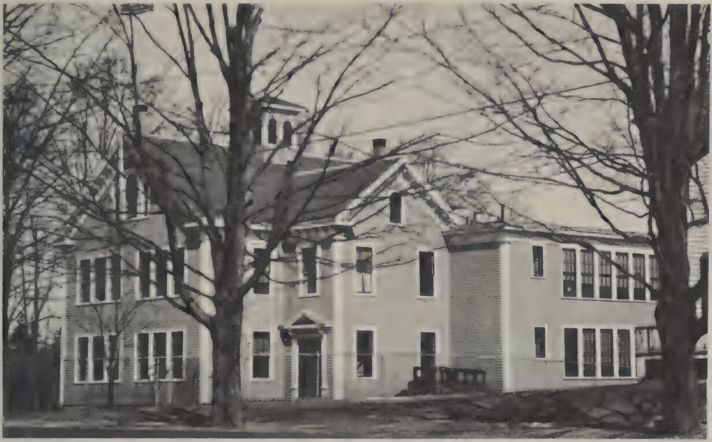
"Our hearts are light and free as air!
For this long hoped-for day has come,
When with our teachers we repair
To this our new, our stately home."

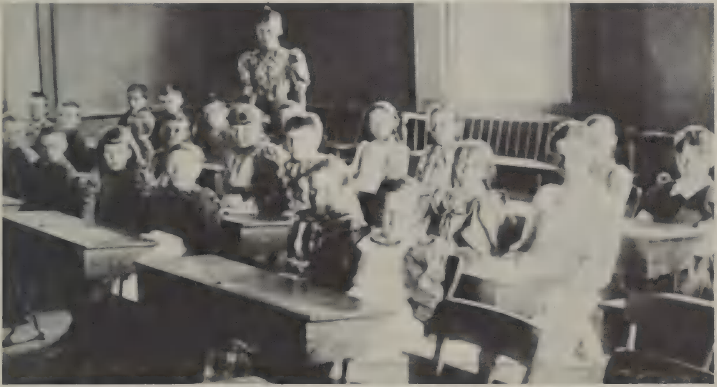
Successive enlargements have brought this building, now Memorial Hall, to its present appearance and its use for town offices. The photograph on Page 291 shows it as it looked after changes and repairs in 1928.

As in modern times, more and more children came to the school each year, although there were almost none over fifteen years of age. This growth led to a division into primary and grammar grades. At one time the primary children of the center district were taught in the town hall, where seats were placed for them. After 1860 the north and east schools were used only for the primary classes, while children from all over town went to the center for the higher grades.

THE SOUTH ("PAPER MILL") DISTRICT

Meantime, as early as 1834, certain residents of the southwest part of the town petitioned for a school nearer their homes. Headed by Jeremiah Flint, the petition represented that with some children from the neighborhood who lived in Danvers and North Reading, there would be at least thirty pupils. They begged permission to organize a new district and to build a schoolhouse. The school committeee responded favorably on the petition on condition that the people of the paper-mill district "and those who may join them do build an house suitable for a schoolhouse within the present year, and that the sum of forty dollars be al-





Centre Grammar School as it appeared in 1928 after enlargement and additions.
Courtesy of Flint Public Library

Miss Minnie Taylor and her class at the Centre School in 1896.

lowed them for the support of a school." The town then voted this appropriation for a teacher in Flint's district. A small building was erected on Flint's land where the gates of the present Flint cemetery on Boston Street now stand.

In 1855 the school committee reported that "The sum of thirty dollars was appropriated to this district, but the number of scholars was so small it was not thought advisable to set up a school therein." There were only twelve pupils at that time. The school, however, continued for a number of years thereafter.

There has been much romancing about old district schools, but actually they offered few attractions. There was no water whatever in any of these buildings. Water had to be carried from nearby wells, and there is a long list of home owners who were paid various sums from one dollar and a half to eight dollars a year for the use of their water supply. The North School got its water from Farnham Stiles, the next house north, from William Lever to the south, or from William Q. Richardson on School Street. The East School pupils went across the street for many years to the home of Samuel Nichols, but at one time had to travel up the long lane to George P. Wilkins's (the Francis Peabody house). The Centre School obtained water at first from George A. Currier, whose land abutted the school yard on the south, but later the children went across Main Street to a spring owned in succession by a number of persons. Although so much money was expended on improving the center building in 1872, it did not have the luxury of running water or the still greater convenience of water closets until 1902.

In the early days an occasional school committee would protest against the discomorts and inconveniences to which the children were subjected. Reporting for the school year 1849-50, E. P. Hutchinson and Daniel Peabody expressed their indignation in no uncertain terms:

> In order to secure the health and comfort of our children at school seats should be furnished adapted to their size, and in Winter mild and equal warmth and good ventilation; and also an appendage where the calls of nature may be answered without observation and interruption. In this view our school-houses are far from being what they should be. In the North schoolhouse the seats are so high that a large proportion of the scholars cannot reach the floor with their feet. In the East, the seats are on the same plan, and, although at the Centre, the seats have been made somewhat more comfortable by sloping the backs, they are still too high for many of the scholars, and the room is altogether too small to contain conveniently the number of children belonging to the district. The plan of warming these houses is also deficient. Some of the scholars are

obliged to sit very near the stove when of a scorching heat, and without the choice of moving away, until nature is obliged to give out, and the victim compelled by sickness to leave the house, while others in the parts of the house farther off, are suffering and shivering with the cold. — No method of ventilation is provided but doors and windows. But as for the appendage of which mention has been made, a shameful deficiency exists. In the North district NO provision has been made, and decency is startled when the fact is stated. While in neither of the other districts is there, as there ought to be, a separate convenience in an unexposed situation.

E. P. Hutchinson, School Committee
Daniel Peabody of Middleton

March 20, 1850

It may be added that a previous report had commented on the lack of furnishings and had recommended the purchase of a globe and a set of maps.

In 1856 the schoolhouses were said to be in good repair, well "sealed" and comfortable, "with convenient yards around them except for the north district, which we hope will not long be an exception."

In conclusion it may be of interest to add the rules and regulations for the Centre School that were adopted by the inhabitants at a legal meeting.[4]

The School shall be kept locked except in School hours. No scholars but those who sweep or make the fires shall be permitted to go in except by consent of the teacher.

The scholars shall not run over, nor stand on the seats or desks in either room — they shall not throw balls, sticks, stones, snowballs, nor anything, against the School house or out houses. They shall not cut, scratch, mark, drive nails, or in any way injure or deface the seats, desks, walls or any other part of the school House or any part of the premises. They are forbidden to touch the clock.

No smoking shall be allowed in the school house. Any damage to the School house, its furniture or appurtenances caused by a Scholar, shall be repaired and the expense thereof shall be paid by the offender, his Parent or Guardian — It shall be the duty of the Teacher to see that these rules are observed, or to give the information of their violation to the Prudential Committee. Also to see that the air in the School room be kept at a comfortable and healthy temperature, and that the fires in the house be carefully attended to and regulated —

The Teacher or some person by his or her direction shall wind up the Clock, and the school hours shall be regulated by it.

The teacher at the close of the day shall see that the doors, windows, and blinds are closed and fastened and take all necessary care for the preservation and security of the School House and all its appurtenances.

CHAPTER XIV NOTES

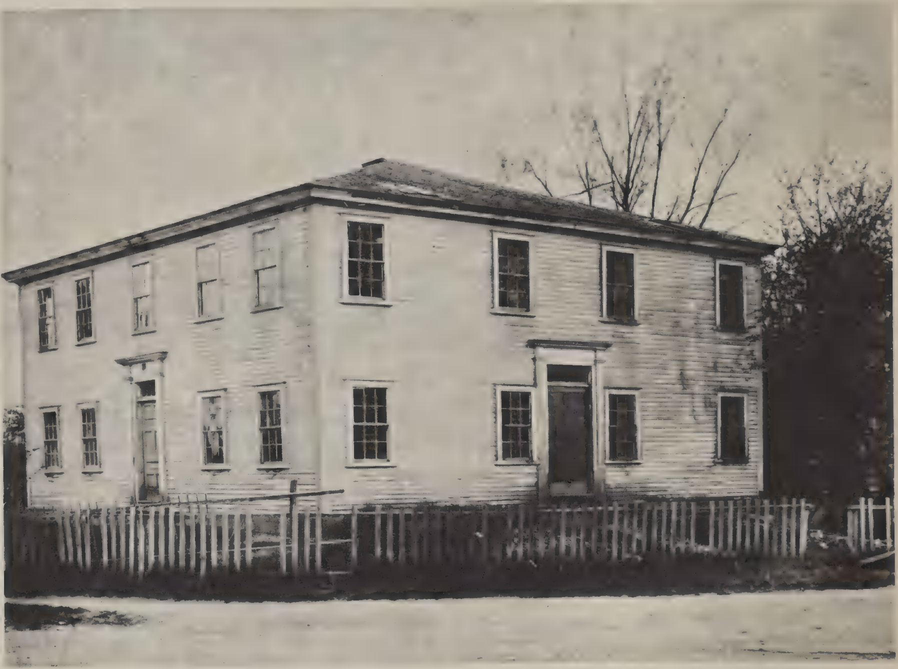
1. Benjamin Peabody, *Account Book.* Copies in Essex Institute and Middleton Historical Society.
2. Major Frank C. Damon, "Ezra Batchelder, Clockmaker," *Historical Collections of the Danvers Historical Society,* XXII, 34.
3. Caroline A. (Stiles) Fletcher, *Diaries,* 1851-1914, in Middleton Historical Society Collections.
4. Martha J. Averill, Manuscripts, II, 78, in Essex Institute.

CHAPTER XV

Growth of the Libraries

A social library, one of the earliest in the state, was founded in Middleton in 1772 by Rev. Elias Smith. This was an important innovation in a town that had had few cultural opportunities. Smith regulated the institution carefully. He drew up a constitution that contained twenty-two articles, governing every activity. A committee of three was to be chosen. The first to hold the office were Archelaus Fuller, Dr. Silas Meriam, and Elias Smith. Smith was librarian as well. These men met every quarter and enforced rules and regulations. The library was to be kept within a mile of the meeting house, and anyone was eligible to join upon payment of an admission fee of six dollars. Members were allowed to keep a book out for three months, after which a fine was imposed. They could sell or give away their right in the library and were under no other obligation except to attend an annual meeting when officers were chosen.

The first library contained seventy-one volumes. Many of them are still in existence in a special collection in the Flint Public Library. They were very solid reading matter, principally history and biography. It is easy to see why the men who supported this little library needed a period of three months to read, perhaps with some difficulty, and to digest such serious literature. The charge book kept by Elias Smith shows that they did indeed do so and that they often continued to read through many volumes. One lighter touch was provided by the *Spectator* papers — a complete set published in Glasgow in 1769 — in vellum bindings. This library served its need from 1772 to 1826. At that time it was in the hands of Rev. Ebenezer Hubbard, who kept it in the Captain Andrew Fuller house where he lived. After he left town in 1828, the books were cared for by Daniel Fuller, son of Archelaus, and were eventually given to the Flint Public Library.



House on site of Flint Public Library, moved in 1891.
Built in 1810 by John Estey for his son, William.
From 1883 to 1891 belonged to Ephraim Fuller and his heirs.

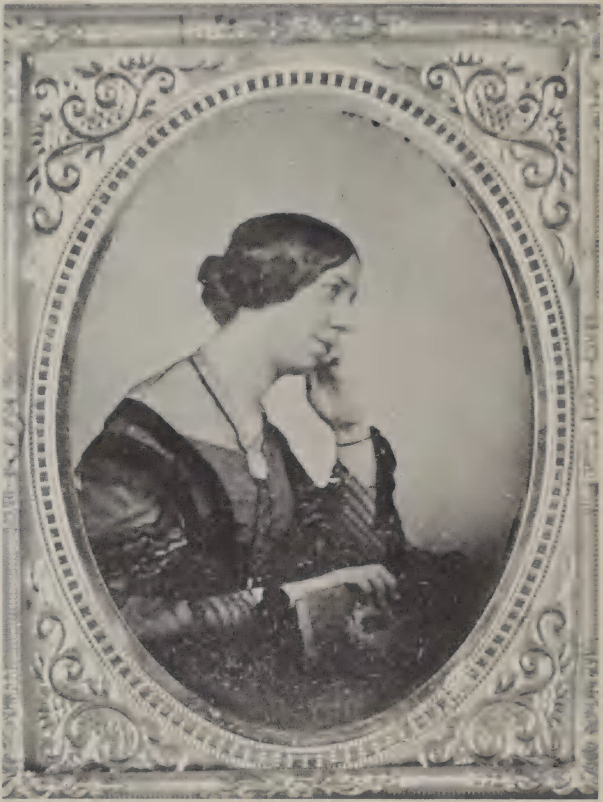
Dr. Ebenezer S. Phelps made an attempt to organize another social library in 1838. Forty-six members joined it, with only eighty-four books. Although small, this collection also provided instructive reading matter. Daniel Richardson, for instance, in one year read a history of Poland, a two-volume life of Washington, parts of biographies of Cromwell and Mary Queen of Scots, and a history of the Jews, along with *Discovery in Africa.* Dr. Meriam took out principally books of travel. David Stiles, Jr., turned to religion and philosophy with a history of the Bible and such books as *Improvement of Society* and *Philosophy of Moral Feelings.* He also read *Pitcairn's Island* and a history of China. Samuel Howe Wilkins was interested in the *Life of Mary Queen of Scots, Life of Josephine,* and *Female Sovereigns.* Elias T. Ingalls took out two volumes of *Venetian History* and the *Life of Mohamed.*

Some years later, in 1865, a third association was formed, with John M. Peabody as president. Membership cost three dollars with an annual assessment of one dollar. This organization had but a brief existence as a private library, but was the genesis of the public library system in Middleton.

George B. Flint, in his diary, under date of March 21, 1865, wrote, "Put down my name to have a library in town." On May 12 he records, "began to work at Public Library." From 1873, when Samuel A. Fletcher was made its librarian, this institution, which was first known as the Middleton Library Association, was run by his family. Through the seventies, his wife, Caroline (Stiles) Fletcher, spent many afternoons arranging and giving out books, sometimes with the aid of her twelve-year-old daughter Lillian. After the death of Mr. Fletcher in 1910, Lillian took over his position in the Flint Public Library, with the help of her younger sister Edith. Lillian Fletcher died in a tragic accident in 1916, but her sister, experienced in this work, was chosen to take her place. Upon her death in 1932 it passed into the care of her dearest friend and heir, Miss Sarah E. Carleton, who was librarian until her retirement in 1954.

The first town library was dependent on subscriptions and gifts, and in that sense was not a true public library. The books were kept in an upper room over the vestibule in the town hall, and were there on sufferance, one might say, as residents attending dances in the hall below were allowed to use it as a coat room.

The Flint Public Library, so styled, began in 1879 as the result of a gift of $1000 from Charles L. Flint. In offering this sum Mr. Flint specified that the town should raise $400 for necessary expenses of setting up a room and to pay for services of a suitable librarian. He also expressed the wish that this gift "should be devoted to the purchase of books of such a character as to meet the wants of all classes of people in the town."



298 Caroline A. Stiles (Fletcher) from a daguerreotype made in 1860.

See Museum Collections Acc. # 137604
(portrait, daguerreotype)

Samuel A. Fletcher, librarian of Flint Public Library
from 1879 to 1910.

Following the acceptance of this offer, the Library Association contributed the 900 volumes in their collection, together with the furniture of their library room and a small sum of money. The town immediately appointed six trustees empowered to choose a librarian, purchase books, and make regulations for running the library.

The new library was opened August 30, 1879, with Samuel A. Fletcher as its librarian. Mrs. Fletcher had been working for months cataloguing the books, and printed catalogues were ready for the opening. On March 13, 1880, Mrs. Fletcher recorded in her diary that the library was open that afternoon and evening and that the largest number of people up to that time (255) came in for books.

The Flint Public Library as Middleton knows it today was not built until 1891. The will of Charles L. Flint had left $10,000 to the town for the erection of a building. The town then appropriated $3500 to purchase the Ephraim Fuller estate in Middleton Square. A fine old house erected by John Estey for his son William in 1810 had to be removed. The large square dwelling, minus its original four chimneys, now stands on the other side of Main Street near the brook. It has been stated, probably without ground, that the house was the birthplace of Senator John James Ingalls of Kansas, son of Elias T. Ingalls. Senator Ingalls, who was a noted orator in his day, and later commemorated by a statue in the Capitol at Washington, was invited to the dedication of the library and attended. At that time he expressed surprise that he was supposed to have been born in the Fuller house. Since his father owned a house on Essex Street when John James was born, the story seems unlikely. Senator Ingalls took advantage of his visit to acquire the anvil used by his grandfather, Theodore Ingalls, a smith of note, which he took back to his office in Kansas.

The present Flint Library was completed and dedicated on November 11, 1891, more than a year after the first brick was laid. Its cost came within the $10,000 appropriated. Meantime a gift known as the B. F. Emerson Fund became available in 1888. This was the annual interest on $10,000, given for general purposes by Benjamin F. Emerson, a native of Middleton, son of Stephen and Sarah R. Emerson.

Within a short time the new building was embellished by stained glass windows: one, in the trustees' room, representing Leigh Hunt's poem, "*Abou ben Adhem,*" was the gift of Mrs. Joseph N. Smith of Lynn, in memory of her father, Jesse Fuller, who was born in Middleton in 1803, and the other, in the reading room, was later given by Mr. Joseph N. Smith in memory of his wife, Caroline (Fuller) Smith. The clock, still so useful to the residents of the town, was contributed by George Fuller.

This library has served the town for some seventy-five years and served it well. It has survived numerous perils. Perhaps the greatest danger it ever experienced was occasioned in its early years by the use of gasoline gas for illumination. Barrels of this explosive fuel were stored in the basement. The lights, equipped with Welsbach burners, were excellent, but, even in retrospect, one heaves a sigh of relief upon hearing that electricity was installed in 1912.

In 1952 the library contained some 10,000 volumes. Today it has a collection of more than 15,300. It is hoped that the building will soon be expanded and rearranged to suit modern requirements.

CHAPTER XVI

Town Properties

THE TOWN POUNDS

The earliest structure in Middleton recorded as belonging to the town was a pound. At its very first town meeting, on July 19, 1728, "the Town agreed that the pound that is at Edward Nickillses should be our pound and that it should be repaired at the Towns Cost." Daniel Kenney, a mason, was chosen to make the repairs. This walled-in enclosure was in the part of Boxford that had just been annexed to Middleton and it stood near Pout Pond Brook where the stream now runs under Liberty Street. The purpose of a pound was to provide a lockup for stray cows and horses whose owners would have to pay a fee and the cost of their feed while they were kept there.

The location must have been inconvenient for those whose animals strayed away at the other end of town, and a more central spot was chosen on March 29, 1730, when it was voted to "build a pound on William Fuller's land near the gate before John Fuller's house." This was on King Street above Mount Vernon and below what is now called the Capt. Andrew Fuller house. This pound may have been made of wood. A lock and key were provided and John Fuller was in charge until 1740, when Jonathan Fuller became pound keeper, and after him, Benjamin Bayley.

In 1742 the town voted to build a new pound "with stones" on Jonathan Estey's land in the corner of the field by Isaac Wilkins. This one cost twenty-six pounds and lasted nearly twenty years. In 1761 a new enclosure was needed. Ezra Putnam, a carpenter, did the work, which cost but four pounds eighteen shillings. It must have been a wooden structure. Twelve years later still another pound was built. A committee of four was chosen to buy a piece of land for the purpose and to see that the work was carried out. This was presumably the lot on the corner of Main and Pleasant Streets then owned by John Estey, the innkeeper, who was in charge of the pound in 1817 and probably in the years preceding.

Nothing more is recorded about this town convenience until March 5, 1849, when Andrew Merriam, who lived across the way, was the pound keeper. In October of that year the town voted to convey its right and title to this property to F. P. Merriam & Company, the shoemaking firm, on condition that they would find land for another pound satisfactory to the selectmen and free of expense to the town. This arrangement was apparently never effected. In 1859 the town pound lot was sold at auction to Edward P. Averill, and the selectmen again set about the business of finding a suitable piece of land and preparing plans for a substantial structure. The lot purchased was probably the one at the beginning of Forest Street that older residents still remember. Dean Fuller was pound keeper there as late as 1872. On March 3, 1879, Isaac Gates was appointed a committee to rebuild the town pound and was authorized to purchase lumber for that purpose.

THE STOCKS

To the modern mind it is amazing that a town like Middleton not far from larger communities, should, as late as June 5, 1759, have asked that a whipping post should be set up and stocks made for the punishment of offenders. It is even more amazing that the town actually voted to build the stocks. They were, I believe, kept at the meeting house, but I have found no reference to their having been used.

THE POWDER HOUSE

In the year 1811 there was considerable apprehension in town about the danger from the British. Men were called into service and paid, although their services were never required. They did have to be supplied with ammunition. Accordingly, a town committee (Daniel Fuller, Andrew Merriam, and Capt. Joseph Peabody) set about the business of procuring land for a powder house and seeing that it was properly built. They decided to put the house on a hill in John Fuller's pasture southeast of the meetinghouse (now east of Pinedale Road). For one dollar Fuller gave the town a deed to the "spot" on which the "town has built a powder house," with the privilege of going through his land. It is said that he put up the building. By decision of the committee it was eight feet square and seven feet high, with a wooden door and roof, and was to be set on a stone foundation. All traces of this structure seem to have disappeared.

BUILDING OF THE HEARSE HOUSE

An early responsibility assumed by the town was the purchase of a hearse and a building to keep it in. As yet there was no public cemetery, but the hearse was for the use of all citizens upon payment of a fee. The matter was put before the voters in 1829, and on May 10 they voted "to have a hearse and building provided the expense shall not exceed more than one hundred and twenty-five or thirty dollars." Daniel Richardson was appointed an agent to carry out these provisions. This choice led to trouble. On May 1, 1830, a committee of three investigated what had been done, and ten days later made this report:

> Having examined the hearse which is charged in the bill at $100 and are of the opinion it is worth the money and that the Town accept of it. We have also examined the hearse house and are of the opinion that it is not finished in a workmanlike manner and that it is necessary that the southeast end of the building should be shingled, also that the doors are too sappey and that said doors ought to be rebuilt of stuff clear of sap or painted also that there should be such other repairs as to make the building tight and if the said Daniel Richardson makes the above repairs as stated that the town accept the same at forty dollars including his services and the land under the house or that the town pay him five dollars for his trouble and he take the building down.

The report was accepted and Richardson was given $114 for the hearse and land and his expense, he to remove the building. The job was then auctioned off to the lowest bidder, Solomon Richardson, for forty-five dollars. Slipshod work was not condoned by Middleton's town fathers. This little hearse house probably stood on the site of the later facility at the right of the entrance to Oakdale Cemetery.

THE TOWN HALL

Aside from the various schoolhouses the most important building erected for the use of Middleton was its town hall. The deciding vote to have such a meeting place was cast March 6, 1848, with the following October set as the finishing date. As yet they had not acquired a site for it. Their first plan was to place it on land of Mrs. Benjamin Farnham, opposite David Stiles's blacksmith shop on Maple Street. There seems to have been difficuly, fancied or otherwise, about the location — perhaps influenced by a little political pull — as a lot of land owned by David Stiles was substituted for Mrs. Farnham's lot and the hall was erected on the present site.

The town hall was completed within the specified time. In November a committee reported on the need for raising money to help pay the expenses, which had been $1500, or ninety dollars a year in interest. The following list of fees for the use of the hall was decided upon:

For such purposes as the diffusion of useful knowledge, such as writing, singing, or common evening schools, 50 cents an evening.
For political or religious meetings, $1 a day or evening.
For Lyceum or other public lectures for the benefit and instruction of the citizens generally, 50 cents an evening.
For dances held by Middleton residents, $2.00 an evening.
For concerts, exhibitions, or lectures for the benefit of those who give them, $3.00 an evening.

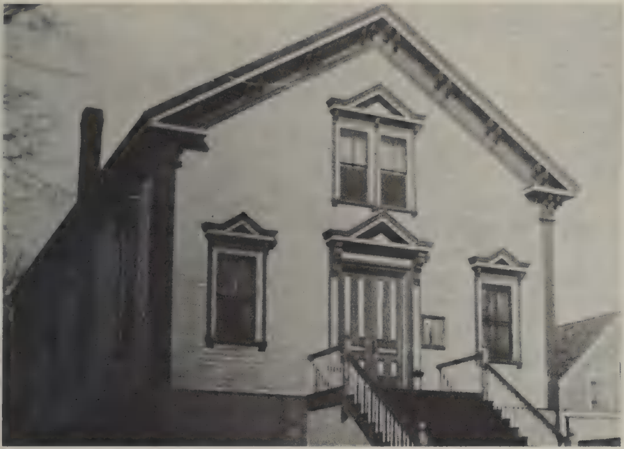
In 1853 a fence was built on three sides, east, south, and west, of the town hall lot. This was to be an open fence with suitable gates on the south side, while a "tight" board fence, six feet high, was to enclose the land on the east and west. Suitable hooks for tying horses were to be placed in the fence posts. At the same time it was decided to set out trees on the lot, and a committee of three was chosen to plant whatever they might think proper.

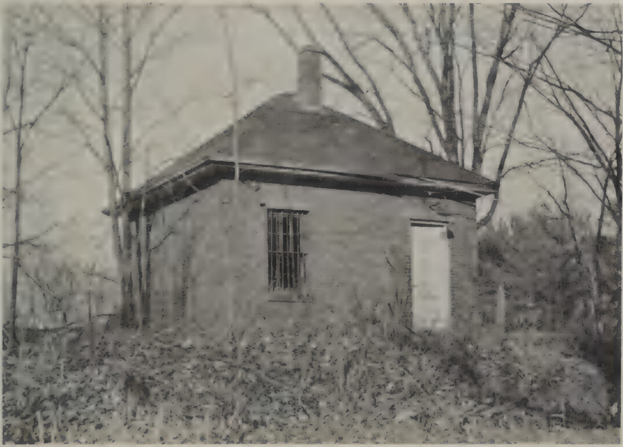
Although this first building was in constant use for all kinds of gatherings, it must have been rather primitive in its facilities. Not until 1875 did the town deem it necessary to have a privy built near the hall, and also to expend some money, not to exceed $150 all told, for curtains or blinds and a bulletin board. As late as 1863, and presumably even later, the hall must have been heated by a stove or stoves, as the use of the building was given free to religious organizations provided they would supply their own wood and light.

In 1873 the building was enlarged to include a large hall and a smaller one, and fees of all kinds were raised considerably. At a casual glance one may see that the structure was raised nearly a whole story, with a high stairway leading to the front doors. Pictures of the building taken in the 1890's show it painted white or cream color, with doors, windows, and corner trim a deep reddish brown. This style of decoration was probably adopted when the town hall was painted in 1883. It was very popular at the time and could have been seen on the church, the schools, and on many private homes.

THE TRAMP HOUSE

A curious little building, known officially as a lockup, but popularly as the "Tramp House," was put up behind the town hall in 1878. Previous to this time, hundreds of tramps, mostly Irish laborers, who followed the





The Town Hall in 1895.
The Tramp House.

railroad track to points north in their search for work, were given shelter over night under the care of Timothy Donovan. They were fed as well, but were expected to chop wood in return for their board. An official record shows that in 1875 Donovan was paid $243.20 for this service in one year.

As the problem increased, the town decided to assume the responsibility. A small piece of land back of the town hall was purchased from A. A. Averill, and a contract for building the house was given to George B. Flint, a mason, for $355, exclusive of other labor, lumber, and furnishings. The building itself was of brick obtained in Danvers. Flint records in his diary details about making a trip to Boston to find out about iron work — presumably the window bars — and going to Peabody to see one Brown, a stone cutter, about caps and sills for the tramp house. On April 8, Flint and his three sons got to work on the job. By the tenth they had laid 10,600 bricks. On the seventeenth Horace and Charles Phelps, the carpenters, had put on the roof. Flint topped the chimney the next day, and the work was done. On April 24 he comments, "Fine shed at Tramp House — newly cemented floor — took down staging." The word "shed" probably means the building itself, as the Tramp House had a cemented floor. It had an entryway and two rooms, but no conveniences. A stove, furniture, and blankets were, however, provided (at a cost of thirty dollars) and Mr. Averill was paid for building a fence and for paint.

CEMETERIES

Up to the time of the Civil War there was no public cemetery in Middleton. The townspeople had buried their dead on their own land. According to David Stiles in his history of the town, there were no fewer than forty-five burial places in Middleton. Even when he wrote in the 1880's, many of them were lost to view in the woods. Today only some eighteen can be accounted for. Most of them are now partly or entirely in ruinous condition.

Among those that have been kept up is the Rev. Elias Smith tomb on Mount Vernon Street. This was built by Smith himself with Joseph Peabody, his son-in-law, whose first wife rests there. The tomb and a few other graves, in an enclosure surrounded by a sturdy wall, is now under the care of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, as is the Peabody cemetery on East Street.

A short distance down Mount Vernon Street the old Fuller burying ground has been cleared and its stones repaired by the Middleton Historical Society. It is noteworthy that many of the earliest graves in the Fuller cemetery and in the town were unmarked except for small boulders at head and foot. One grave in this plot has been wholly covered with rocks, as if to foil the depredations of wild animals. It is clear that country people, so far from sources of supply, and with little cash to spend, were obliged to forego the luxury of carved gravestones. The earliest one I have recorded in Middleton — also in this burying ground — is that of Mrs. Elizabth Perkins, wife of John, dated 1738. A fine carved stone and footstone were provided for the grave of the first minister, Rev. Andrew Peters, who died in 1756.

Several other burial places have had family care: the Flint cemetery on Boston Street, endowed by Bertha Flint Woodward and kept up by the town; the Merriam lot on South Main Street, improved in part by town funds; and the Richardson cemetery in Haswell Park recently put in order by the Richardson brothers.

A few of the old grounds have succumbed to road building and the remains interred in Oakdale — notably those of the Joseph Fuller family and their neighbors, once to be seen on Essex Street. A small graveyard on the farm owned by Jonathan Berry on Forest Street has recently been demolished in the same way. The earliest graveyard in the town is on the Symonds place on Peabody Street, now the home of Henry Sawyer. He has given it some attention and has ascertained the presence of a dozen or more unmarked graves. John Willard, victim of the witchcraft delusion, was buried in this lot.

Among the scattered burials in small lots around the town are those of Jacob Fuller and his son, Dr. David Fuller, in a lot once surrounded by a wall on the land of the Misses Richardson on South Main Street; the Ingalls burying ground, which accommodated other families, on a hill south of the residence of Charles D. Langille on Essex Street; the Amos Peabody tomb and graves on Locust street, almost wholly destroyed by vandalism; and a small walled-in graveyard containing the stones of Sewall Elliot and his family on lower Mill Street. Isolated graves will be found on upper Mill Street, where Capt. Nathaniel Peabody and his wife are buried; those of John Stiles and his wife on Kenney Road some distance north of the old Kenney cellar; and on the land of James J. Storrow, where two of the children of Gustavus H. Tufts were buried on a little hill.

Before the Civil War Daniel Richardson had sold a number of burial lots in his field near the present receiving tomb, and the members of his own family were buried there. The graves of the Giddings and Israel Curtis families, the Berrys, Stileses, and many others who died before 1860, may be seen nearby. In 1861, with increasing need for burial facilities, the town voted to buy a piece of land for a public cemetery. Richardson's six-acre field, already devoted in part to the purpose, was chosen and given the name Oakdale. James N. Merriam, Samuel Peabody, and William A. Phelps were made a committee to lay out the grounds, to build a fence, and to sell lots at auction to the highest bidders. Two years later the town set aside an acre in the cemetery for the burial of soldiers.

The granite receiving tomb still in use was built by the town in 1872 at a cost of $286.16, and in the following year a new hearse house was erected at the entrance.

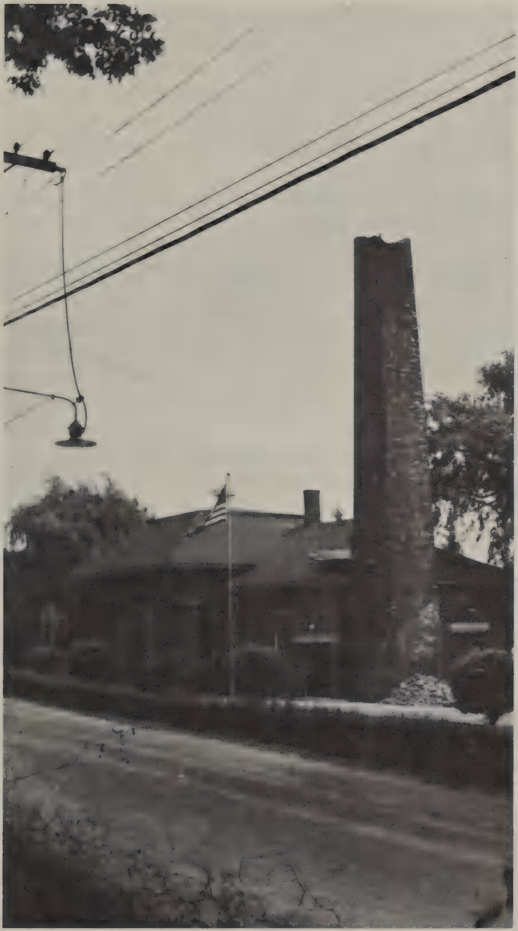
THE DANVERS WATER WORKS

In 1875 the town of Danvers made a proposal to take water from Middleton Pond. A committee was appointed to represent Middleton's interest at a State House hearing and to try to get legislation requiring Danvers to supply Middleton with "water from its works on just and reasonable terms." An agreement was reached, and the first step taken was to contract with Danvers to put in three hydrants in Middleton. This was done, and arrangements were then made to locate three public watering places — one in the square, one in or near the cemetery, and the third near Howe Station.

This was a momentous decision for the town and one that has proved its worth for nearly ninety years. Its advantage was realized almost immediately and it was utilized in various ways. Water was piped into the cemetery. The town bought a fire hose for the town hall, to be kept in readiness there. In 1881 a drinking fountain, familiar in old photographs, was placed in the town square. Since one thing leads to another, the selectmen were instructed to place a lamp over or near the watering trough and to provide a man to light and care for it. This was done by Maurice E. Tyler and John M. Peabody for years.

On May 30, 1877, Middleton voted "To give the Danvers Water Board, individuals or associations, permission to lay water pipes within the limits of the public highways in this town and to do such excavating as may be necessary — roads to be left in as good condition as possible." Meantime, in the previous February, the Danvers water department had purchased a piece of land on Lake Street running along the lower end of the pond, where they erected the pumping station still in use. Originally it was run by steam and had a high smoke stack.

In 1880 the town voted to build a water tank. This was but a first step towards the reservoir that was realized sixteen years later. In the intervening years Middleton residents were greatly plagued by accidents to the water pipes. Water systems in a country town were then an innovation and neither materials nor installation met requirements. The newspapers



Pumping Station, Lake Street, during demolition of the chimney, May 1954.

were full of accounts of their failure. A typical story from *The Salem Evening News* of September 28, 1893, reads:

> "The water gave out yesterday on Lake Street —, and the rush of water came with such force that it threw the earth out for several feet, leaving the pipes bare. People were deprived of water without any warning."

The last sentence struck home. Within a month the water department arranged to have a signal given in case of a break in the main. Placed on C. A. Rogers' factory, near the square, a whistle was to give one long and three short blasts when such an accident happened. In November 1894 a break occurred near Howe Station so massive and so sudden, the water supply was cut off again without notice. Within a week another break on Maple Street also resulted in an instant shutoff. One can imagine the annoyance and dissatisfaction of those who were paying water rates at losing their supply for two days in the following week. By December the Danvers water works installed a "chime" whistle at the pumping station to warn the inhabitants of what had become an all too frequent occurrence. One of the worst struggles with the water system took place on March 1, 1895, when it was found that a pipe leading from the main to a house on Lake Street had been frozen solid for two weeks. The workmen had the greatest difficulty in digging out the frozen earth nearly five feet below the surface. A two-day shutoff in December of that year roused the fear of fire during such emergencies.

Although Middleton Pond was connected in 1895 with Swan Pond by an iron pipe for additional supply, the water board soon saw that a reservoir with extra capacity and pressure was needed. On April 30, 1896, they bought three acres of land on the summit of Will's Hill from Darius Case, and construction was begun in June. About thirty Italian immigrants were given work on the project, and the labor force was later raised to sixty-five. All work in those days was done by hand, while many horses and carts were hired to remove the earth from the great excavation. The reservoir was completed by September 30, 1896, when the basin was filled for the first time. A great many spectators came to view the proceeding. In her diary, Mrs. Caroline (Stiles) Fletcher made some notes about the structure. She recorded that the reservoir was circular in shape and that it held 1,800,800 gallons when filled. A twenty-inch pipe led to it from the pumping station below. She noted that the pressure when the engines first began to pump was fifty pounds and that the water poured in at the rate of 90,000 gallons an hour. A slightly higher pressure for pumping 60,000 gallons was normally required. The contract price for this accomplishment was $11,000, but, as it actually cost $14,000, the contractor was out of pocket.

Breaks in the system occurred less frequently after this installation and the presence of a town water supply was considered a great benefit. However, it has never been extended to the more remote parts of Middleton.

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

No fire apparatus of any kind is mentioned in the town records until 1873. Middleton already owned a hook and ladder house, and they then voted the expenditure of $63.67 for ladders and $7.50 for buckets. This was indeed the simplest equipment. The town had nothing that could be called a fire department before Danvers began to pump water from Middleton Pond in 1875. In the next year the town contracted with the new water works to install three hydrants, in the square, the cemetery, and at Howe Station. In 1877 it was voted to purchase a hose and hose carriage and a house to keep it in. This first hose carriage was bought from Hunneman & Company and cost seventy-six dollars. Additional items brought the value of the new equipment to $800. The question of regular firemen then arose, and the town voted to have twelve firemen at three dollars each per year! Fire fighting was still a matter of neighborly public service.

In 1884, $419.32 was spent for necessary utilities, which seem to have been provided for only two men: 400 feet of rubber hose, two firemens' axes, two rubber coats, two lanterns, and spanner ropes. Twelve men, however, received thirty-six dollars for their services that year. A shed was rented from F. P. Merriam for twelve dollars a year.

As time went on these possessions needed constant renewal. J. J. Grothe, the local blacksmith, made such things as hydrant wrenches and ladder hooks, and repaired the hose carriage from time to time. New hose, pumps, and hand pumps were purchased. In 1896 J. N. Esty contracted to build a new hose house and was paid $275 for it.

Middleton always had and still has the direful threat of forest fires. This was a great problem. When B. J. McGlauflin was fire warden, he presented an additional bill of $112.64 for fighting forest fires. This activity involved the business of hiring "teams" or wagons from a number of people in town, as the fire department apparently had no horses of its own.

In 1899, when Loren G. Estey was fire chief, the town paid the Merritt Electric Company $96.79 for blowing its factory whistle as a fire alarm. It is said that there was another whistle on the pumping station and that one was blown to indicate a house fire and the other for a forest fire. No doubt all able-bodied men turned out for woods fires, as they still do.

Bronze fire bell cast by George H. Holbrook of East Medway in 1839. Installed on hose house in 1906.
Now in Fuller Meadow School.

These whistles were powerful enough to be heard the length and breadth of the town.

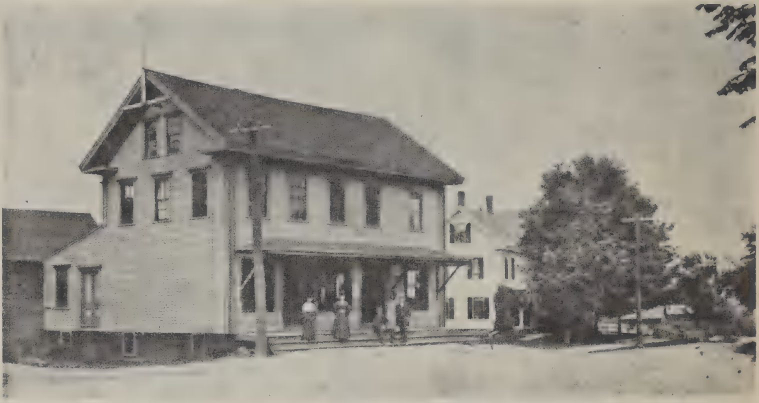
In 1906 the town voted to have a fire bell on the hose house and seventy-five dollars was appropriated. In some way L. G. Esty had learned that a bell in Merrimack, Massachusetts, was for sale for fifty dollars. It belonged to one Bailey Sargent, who was then town treasurer of Merrimac. Subsequent investigations indicate that the bell was his own private property and did not belong to the town. It may have been used on his carriage factory there. The further expense to Middleton was considerable: Maurice E. Tyler had to be paid for teaming the bell down from Merrimac and a belfry had to be built on the hose house for its installation.

This bell is a handsome affair of bronze, cast by George G. Holbrook of East Medway, in 1839, and so marked in raised letters. When a new fire station was built in Middleton in 1954, the old hose house was torn down, and the bell, no longer needed, was sold for one dollar to the Middleton Historical Society. Its tongue was repaired and it was mounted on a yoke of heavy hand-wrought timber fashioned by Arthur E. Curtis. Henry Sawyer, a member of the society, provided a brass plate, suitably inscribed, to be mounted on the framework. This historical trophy was returned to the town in 1964 and placed in the new Fuller Meadow School.

THE POST OFFICES

Middleton's first post office was in the tavern in the square with Joseph W. Batchelder, brother of Col. Amos, the innkeeper, as the first postmaster. He removed to Topsfield in 1839. Thereafter Col. Batchelder, and later his son Joseph A., ran the post office for fifty-five years. The colonel's account book kept from 1839 to 1854, gives a glimpse of how he conducted the business. When he first took it over, adhesive stamps had not been invented. Judging by his records, he ran a credit business. Every person who sent mail was charged for it in his book. Some of them ran accounts for months without paying, if they ever did. When anyone sent mail and paid for it on the spot, Batchelder marked a cross before his name, sometimes with a notation that it was a bundle, book, letter, pamphlet, or papers. Batchelder must have lost money by this very loose system of accounting, or he may have managed to collect. It must be remembered that before 1850 only a small handful of mail went through the office in one day.

A notice sent to Miss Caroline Stiles in 1857 from the post office in Salem gives a touch of the fine courtesy of former days so sadly lacking in the computer communications of today: It says:



316 Post Office in Oscar Cram's store, Central Street, in 1905.

Miss Fannie Flint, daughter of Sylvanus, first a teacher, then a postmistress at South Middleton for 34 years.

A letter bearing your address is detained in this office for non-payment of postage. By enclosing to me immediately on receipt of this, one three cent stamp and pre-paying your note of reply, the Letter will be duly forwarded according to its direction.

Respectfully yours,
John J. Dalrymple,
Asst. Postmaster

Joseph A. Batchelder died in 1892, and two years later his brother Francis E. was appointed to the position. Francis set about remodeling and enlarging the office, which at that time seems to have been in a wing of the tavern A waiting room twelve feet by sixteen was built, additional boxes to the number of 240 were installed, and an extension to house the office itself made more commodious quarters. Up to this time and considerably later, residents were obliged to go to the post office to get or send their mail.

The Batchelders had been Democrats and had received their appointments from Democratic administrations. A change came about in December 1897, when Oscar Cram, a staunch Republican, was appointed to the position. Cram had lived in Middleton for thirty-eight years and was a Civil War veteran. He at once fitted up a room in the store that he rented from Capt. Timothy Hoyt. This stood on Central Street east of the Wilkins store, but facing the square.

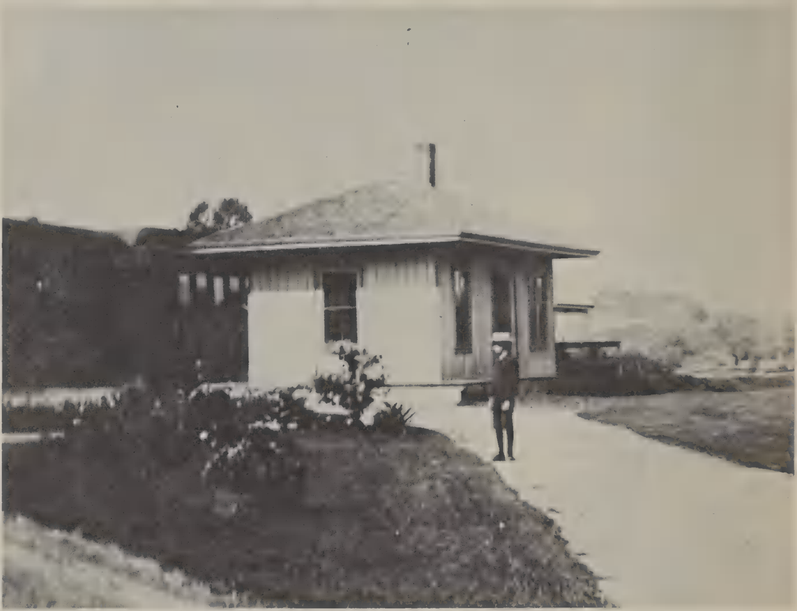
An innovation during the Cram regime was the introduction of the Rural Free Delivery System in 1908. Eugene Brown was the driver for forty-six years until his retirement in 1954. Hired at first for sixty dollars a month, Brown led a life of stress and strain. Often from early morning, when he began with a trip to the railroad station to bring the mail up to the office in a wheelbarrow, until he got through at night after his sixteen-mile route, his day was a round of ceaseless activity. For the first few years he had a horse and a little closed-in wagon. Even with 600 possible stops, this was pleasant enough in the summer, but during the stormy winter months, every day was an epic struggle. The dirt roads were either muddy or drifted with snow, and many times "Gene" had to walk ahead of the horse. In 1914 he was provided with a model T Ford, the first of many Fords to come. In those early R.F.D. days, the mail was not the only thing conveyed to the outskirts of the town. It was not unusual for Brown to deliver baby chickens, a hive of bees, a harness, or foodstuffs to those who could make no other arrangement to get them.

During Mr. Cram's term as postmaster the office was moved across Central Street to quarters of its own in a one-story building. This was later dismantled by its owners, the Richardsons, who replaced it with a brick building. Cram, however, had the office in this location until his death, although he became disabled in his last year. His daughter, Mrs. Louise Snow, took on his duties and was still postmistress in 1926. She was succeeded by William Young, who, with the assistance of his wife, ran the office for some ten years.

On January 1, 1937, Edward H. Leary became postmaster. By that time the headquarters had been moved into rooms in the Richardsons' corner block with an entrance on Central Street. Mr. Leary was in service during World War II, but Mrs. Leary carried on in his place until his term ended in 1948. At that time Mrs. Mary Meagher became the incumbent. The office was moved again in her time to its present location facing the square. Mrs. Meagher resigned in 1963 and her daughter, Mrs. Mary Lee, has taken her place .

In 1893 a branch post office in South Middleton was authorized and Miss Fannie Flint was appointed to keep it. The diary of her father, Sylvanus Flint, indicates that persons starting new offices were expected to provide their own equipment. Miss Flint and her father traveled about for weeks trying to find boxes and a suitable counter. The boxes she finally obtained from Francis E. Batchelder, whose father, the Middleton postmaster, had died the year before; the counter she had made.

The South Middleton office was a service carried on principally for the benefit of the paper mill and its personnel. It was installed north of the Flint homestead in a small building intended for a store. This soon became a typical country store business plus post office, selling first confectionery and then groceries for the convenience of the neighbors. Fannie Flint ran this office until her death in 1927.



320 Howe Station on the Essex Railroad, c. 1900.

CHAPTER XVII

Public Transportation

THE RAILROADS

Until 1848 no one in Middleton had got around at any speed faster than that of a horse. When the Essex Rail Road began to run through town on September 1, 1848, it was as much of an innovation as are the beginnings of space travel today. In Middleton the trains came to a stop in a thick grove of pine trees, whose aroma was remembered with nostalgia by residents fifty years later. From the station a foot path, later widened as Central Street, led uphill to the village.

It is perhaps a little difficult now to realize what this facility meant to the townspeople. All of a sudden they were able to go as far as Boston and back in one day, and a shopping trip to Salem became an easy matter. The cost of travel by train was very low. A season ticket to Salem used by Caroline Stiles when she attended Normal School, cost but five dollars for four months, or $1.25 a month for four or five round trips each week. When Howe Station in the eastern part of town was opened, many passengers boarded the train there and saved a few cents by so doing. This station was named for Benjamin Howe, one-time state representative, who used it regularly for his Boston trips.

The railroad at first ran only one train from Salem to Lawrence, twice up and twice back, but when travel increased, another one was added, giving double service. The up and down trains met at Middleton. In its later operations the company provided five trains daily to Salem: at 6.55 and 8.36 A.M. and 2.06, 4.23, and 6.33 P.M. Since Middleton had a round table, enabling trains to return, there were more trains to Salem than to Lawrence, which could be reached only by taking the cars at 7.22 A.M. and 4.52 or 6.33 P.M.

The introduction of this service changed Middleton from an isolated farming community to a place where some industry could be carried on.

Shoemaking began to boom as a business rather than as a craft. When Francis P. Merriam in the early fifties built the factory that was for so many years the most conspicuous building in the square, it was in response to the increased facilities for shipping shoes and getting the materials for their manufacture. By 1855 the number of people working at the shoe business had doubled. Shops run by William H. Hutchinson on North Main Street, Henry Wilkins in the square, J. H. Semons and E. P. Averill & Co. on Maple Street, and Augustus P. Hutchinson near Howe Station all flourished as a result of improved transportation.

At the other end of town a second line, the Salem & Lowell Rail Road, was opened August 5, 1850. This was a connection through South Danvers and Peabody to Wilmington on the Boston & Lowell Line. At that point passengers could change for Boston or continue north to Lowell. This road held out great hopes of connecting Salem, via Lowell, with the New Hampshire towns to the north, and to Worcester, and even New York, westward. These hopes were not fully realized, but the line gave Middleton another way of travel to Boston and was of great value to the paper mill business, Middleton's most important industry.

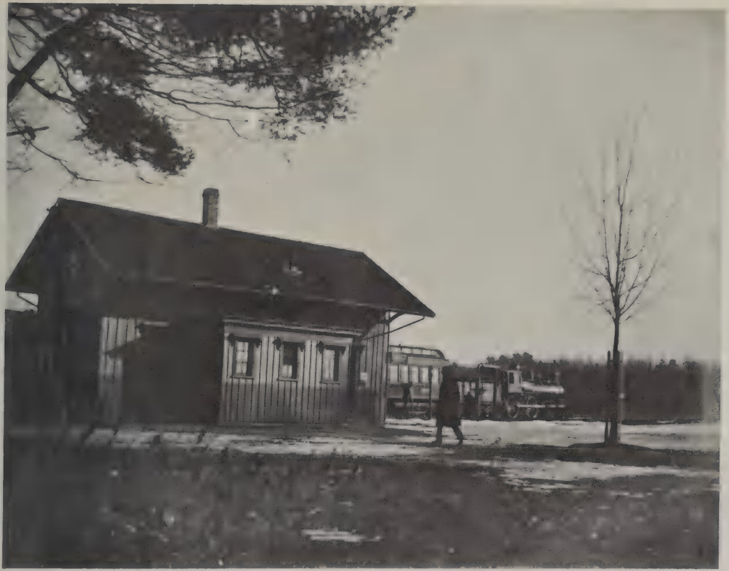
The first time table for this line reads:

> Leave Salem for Lowell at 6:45 and 10:30 A.M. and 3:45 P.M.
> Leave Lowell for Salem at 8:05 A.M., 12:10, and 6:30 P.M.
> Trains will stop to receive or deliver passenger at South Danvers, at Proctor's corner and Phelp's Mill in West Peabody, Oak Dale in Middleton, North Reading, Wilmington, Burtt's Mill and Tewksbury.

No engines were to be taken out on Sundays except by express permission of the Superintendent.

It will be noted that the South Middleton station was called Oak Dale. This designation does not seem to be familiar in Middleton. Although it appeared on tickets, the stop was usually called South Middleton or Paper Mill Station.

A number of serious accidents occurred on the railroad lines. One, referred to in a diary as "Great Railroad accident"; arouses a shock, but leaves us to imagine the worst. On August 6, 1867, a train ran off the track just above the crossing near the North School. Mrs. Walter S. Flint, who as a little girl (Etta Terrio) was a pupil at the school, once told me that the engine overturned and burned, while one of the trainmen was horribly mangled, and, I believe, killed. The children, however, were allowed to leave the school to take a look at this scene of death and destruction, while Etta's father rushed from his house up Essex Street, to give assistance. At times other trains got off the tracks and travel was delayed, on one occasion for two and-one-half hours. Sometimes, also,



Middleton Station on Essex Railroad, in 1890.

they were unable to move after bad storms in winter, when it was impossible to dig the engines out of the snow. Once on the Lowell line a train was buried for three days.

In spite of accidents and tie-ups, the railroads were a boon to the residents of Middleton. Many people were enabled to commute to their business in other towns, and outsiders found it a convenience when they wished to visit friends and relatives in Middleton. It was, in fact, a necessity and a success until the arrival of the street railway in 1901.

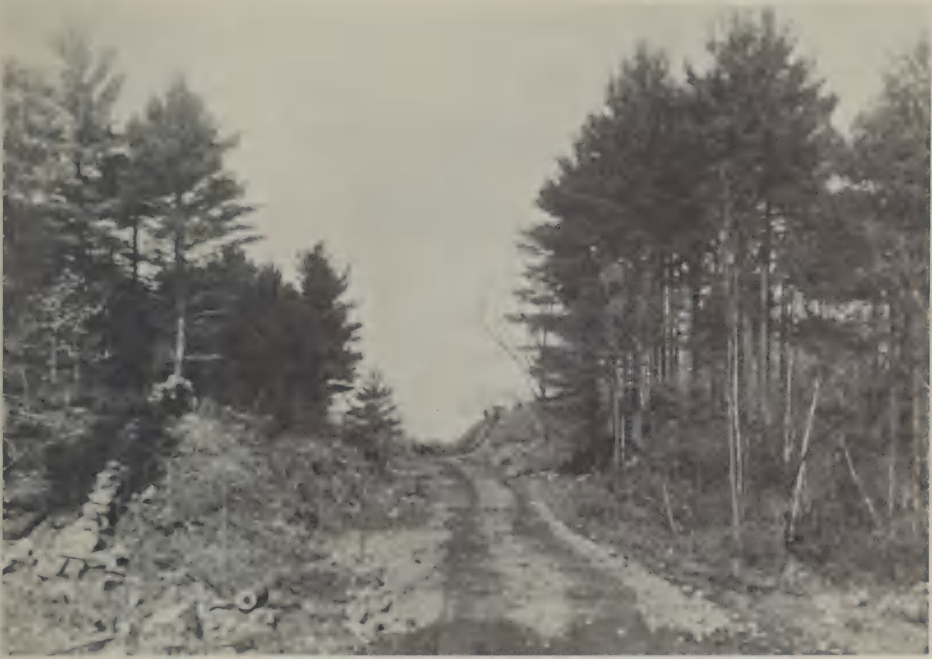
The Salem & Lawrence line struggled on with ever-decreasing business during the next twenty-five years. Its existence depended, not on carrying freight, but on having the patronage of an adequate number of passengers. At a state house hearing on the question of giving up the road, when one hundred people were present, those who used the line regularly with commuter tickets were asked to stand, and only two persons did so. It is said that in its later years the Essex Rail Road had only twenty regular customers.

It was evident that the service would have to be abandoned. This came about when a train from Salem to Lawrence made the last run on January 2, 1926. A few elderly citizens like Maurice E. Tyler, had been present when the first train went through in 1848, and were there to see the last one pull out of Middleton Station at 6.33 P.M. on the final day. The tracks were soon torn up, as were those of the Salem & Lowell branch, which came to an end soon afterwards.

THE STREET RAILWAY

By 1900 the urge to get about easily from one place to another had beset the whole country. Middleton felt the same promptings. Why walk uphill and downhill through cold and snow to a railroad station, when it might be possible to step out of one's front door and get aboard a trolley? The possibilities for such a convenience were agitated as early as December 1898, when a third citizens' meeting took place. In the following month a group calling itself the Middleton Improvement Society was organized. They set about getting information as to the feasibility and probable cost of an electric car line. They even raised a little money to cover the cost of making a survey.

One meeting followed another. Van Vleet, the representative of the electric company, offered to buy back one thousand dollars' worth of stock, if the town would put $5000 into the project. There was much enthusiasm for this arrangement. In September 1899 the voters had already approved the scheme and in October they held a special town meeting to ratify it.



North Main Street before street car rails were laid in 1902.

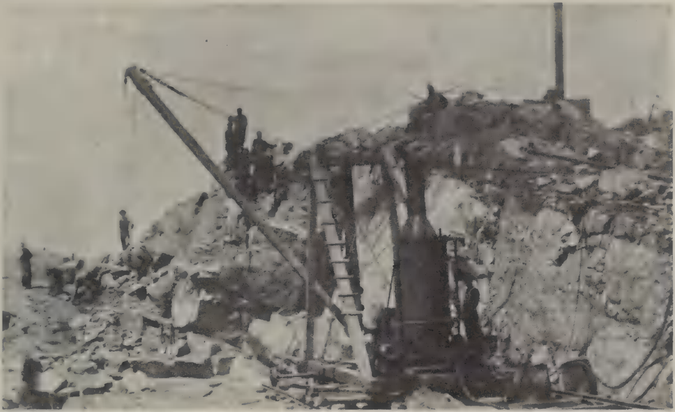
By January of the following year materials for the road began to arrive. Ties from Bethel, Vermont, were laid out along the street from the Danvers line to Middleton Square. A further extension was not planned at this time. The franchise for the road shows that all tracks were to be laid on the side of each street or highway, at all times leaving sixteen feet of roadway for other travel. Wherever the tracks crossed other streets, the crossing was to be paved with cobblestones. The cutting of trees or branches was to be subject to the approval of the selectmen and snow removal was to be done by the company. There were twenty such provisions in this document, covering every contingency. The road was supposed to be in operation by December 31, 1899.

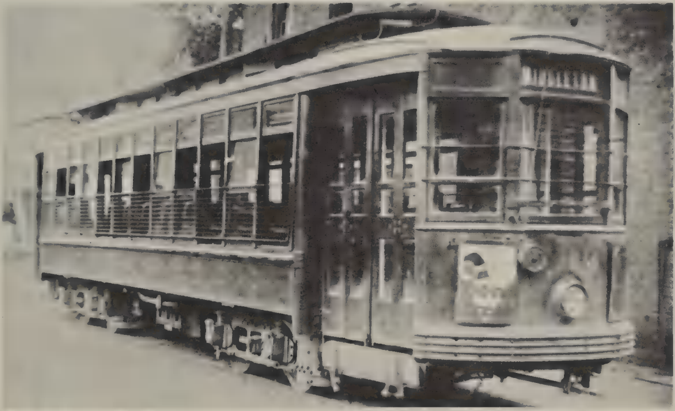
That the Van Vleet Company was unable to meet these obligations was partly the result of delays in getting materials and workmen. Actually the road was not built until late in 1900, and the first cars to run regularly made the trip on June 10, 1901.

Caroline Stiles Fletcher, in her useful diary, reported that they broke ground in front of her house on November 5, 1900. About a week after the line got in operation, work was begun on an overhead bridge across the railroad tracks at the foot of Liberty Street. The overpass was a high structure, requiring a long approach and the removal of a number of houses. Its stone foundations may still be seen next to the abandoned railroad track. It is said that when the first street cars reached the track at grade level, both passengers and crew got out and walked over to another trolley waiting for them on the other side. A barge was later provided during this construction to take travelers from the river bridge to Middleton Square.

Although this car line had troubles of all kinds, it seems to have been beloved by the people of Middleton. Only six weeks after its opening a car ran off the track — a not unusual occurrence in years to come. When winter set in they were stalled for four days in December from sheer inability to clear the tracks. Within a year the first rails were laid on the extension that would take the facility to Lawrence. A new car bearing officials went over the road to Lawrence for the first time on August 23, 1902, and a week later the line was opened to the public. A greater number of cars was needed and provided. One could go to Salem or Lawrence every half hour. Mrs. Fletcher commented on September 14, 1902: "Two cars each way every half hour disturb our Sunday quiet."

On January 26, 1904, she recorded an event which no doubt caused amusement in a still Victorian community. The seven o'clock car from Salem stalled along the line and the passengers had to spend the night in it. Among those aboard were three well-known Middleton ladies and three of its most respectable gentlemen. At 6:30 in the morning a





Cutting through ledges for street car tracks north of the town in 1902.

Convertible car on Danvers - Lawrence Street Railway, 1930'S.

breakfast was brought to them, and they were then conveyed in hacks to the railroad station and their fares paid to Middleton.

The street cars served Middleton long and well for thirty-four years. There is no doubt that before the coming of the automobile they were used for pleasure as well as for a means of getting somewhere. Open cars in the summer provided a way of enjoying a cool breeze on hot summer evenings and made possible picnics at Salem Willows and Lowell Island. After World War I the car lines had to face the rising costs of maintenance to serve a diminishing number of people, but the worst threat to their existence was the private automobile. In a few short years the world of Middleton changed. The horse sheds at the meetinghouse were torn down, the roads were paved, and there was little patronage for the street cars.

The last run was on June 15, 1935. The cars were then replaced by the bus lines that have provided transportation ever since. In a changed world, even the buses have had to run on a reduced schedule. Once more Middleton is becoming an isolated community for those who do not drive. For that reason it has preserved something of its original character. Although more than half of the town's inhabitants have ancestors in Canada, Ireland, Poland, Sweden, Germany, and elsewhere, they display many of the characteristics of the first settlers. They still work for the same objectives as did the forefathers — good roads, good schools, and a peaceful, well-ordered community.

Index

A

Abell, Phillip, 179
Abbott, George, Sr., 16
Abbott, Thomas, 16
Adams, George, 148
Adams, Rev. Solomon, 259 - 261
Allen, William, 38
Amherst, N. H., 245, 246
Andover highway, 35 - 39
Andover meadow brook, 43, 59
Andover - Middleton Turnpike, 39
"Andover old road", 29, 40, 69
Andover south road, 41
Andrews, Elizabeth, 33, 156
Andrews, Oliver, 279
Andrews, William O., 162
Atwood, Alton B., 142
Atwood, Charles N., 142
Averill, Alfred A., 266, 270, 308
Averill, Andrew P., 211
Averill, Benjamin, 72, 74
Averill, Benjamin, Jr., 74
Averill, E. P. & Co., 322
Averill, Job, 77
Averill, John, 77, 247
Averill, Joseph, 75, 211
Averill, Martha, J., (Mrs. A. A.), 29, 53, 76, 90, 97, 98, 181, 218, 269
Averill, Nathaniel, 77
Averill's bridge, 43
Averill, William, 77

B

Bacon, J. A., 134, 136
Bagley, Col. Jonathan, 246, 247
Barett, Louis A., 67
Barker, John, 247
Barker, Richard, 16
Barker, Stephen, 194
Barker, William, 194
Barnes, Benajah, 113
Barrows, R. Lionel, 190, 192
Bartholomew, Henry, 22
Batchelder, Col. Amos., 45, 137, 162, 234, 235, 244, 315
Batchelder, Francis E., 318
Batchelder, Joseph, 233, 234
Batchelder, Joseph A., 235, 315, 318
Batchelder, Joseph W., 315
Bayley, Benjamin, 225, 226, 303
Bayley, Benjamin, Jr., 226
Bayley, Elizabeth, w. Thomas, 19, 225
Bayley, Nicholas, 225, 226
Bayley, Rebecca, 225, 226
Bayley, Thomas, 19, 223, 225
Bayley, Thomas, s. Thomas, 225
Beech (Boston) Brook, 35, 40, 45, 69, 71 - 75
Bellingham, Gov. Richard, 15, 16
Bennett, Russell S., 229
Bentley, Rev. William, 39, 110, 233
Bernard, Rev. Joseph H., 275
Berry, Ebenezer, 106, 107
Berry, Hermon, 193
Berry, Isaac, 43
Berry, John, 106
Berry, Jonathan, 137, 138, 309
Berry, Lydia A., 167
Berry, Nehemiah, 45
Berry, Olive, 198
Berry, Rebecca, 167
Berry, Samuel, 65, 106, 280
Berry, Washington, 174, 263
Bill, Dr. Audrey, 167, 279
Bixby, Charles, 167
Black, Hannah, 208
Blanchard, Katharine, 257
Blunt, William, 163
"Bolts", 49
Boston Street, 42
Box factory, 140
Bradford, Robert, 43, 259
Bradford, Samuel, 171, 196, 229 - 233
Bradford Tavern, 231 - 233
Bradford, William, 107, 231
Bradstreet, Abigail (Fuller), 227, 228
Bradstreet, Ezra, 98, 228
Bradstreet, Mrs. Harry H., 153
Bradstreet, Dr. Joseph, 228
Bradstreet, Simon, 16
Brookhouse, Matilda, 163
Brown, Eleazer, 92, 96 - 98, 191, 210
Brown, Eugene, 318
Brown, Nathan, 163
Burton, Isaac, 22

Burton, John, 187, 240, 247
Bush Corner, 93
Buxton, Andrew, 79
Buxton, Hannah, 194
Buxton, John, 38, 78, 79, 111
Buxton, John, Jr., 78
Buxton, Joseph, 79
Buxton, Rachel, 163
Buxton, Timothy, 79

C

Carleton, Mrs. Betsey, 174
Carleton, Sarah E., 297
Carrell, Nathaniel, 27, 107, 240, 279
Carrell, Samuel, 247
Carroll, Francis, 107
Carroll, Mary, 20
Case, Darius, 312
Case, Ebenezer, 231
Case, Elijah, 45, 186
Cave, Amos, 23, 65, 66, 98
Cave, Sarah, 23, 30
Cave, Sylvester, 90, 97
Cave, Thomas, 22, 23, 63, 71, 85 - 90, 189, 241, 258
Cemeteries, 308
Centre schoolhouses, 285, *et seq.*
Chadbourne, Rev. Llewellyn D., 275, 277
Chandler, William, 194
Cheever, Benjamin, 107
Cheever, Ebenezer, 107
Cheever, Ezekiel, 107
Cheever, Samuel, 107
Civil War activities in Middleton, 251, 252
Civil War, names of men who died in, 251
Clapboards, 16
Clark, Mary, 186
Clark, Thomas, 186
Clarke, Elizabeth, 171
Colonial wars, 245
Conlan house, 119
Corwin, Elizabeth, 129
Corwin, George, 16, 29
Cram, Oscar, 318, 319
Crane, Luther, 81, 132, 134
Crane, Zenas, 81, 132
Creighton, Albert M., 199, 205
Cronin, Mr. and Mrs. Dennis, 275
Cross, Peter, 216
Cummings, Abbott Lowell, 154, 181
Cummings, John, 170
Cummings, Samuel A., 69, 129, 139, 140
Cummings, Sarah, 215
Currier, Alathea, 228
Currier, George A., 153, 159, 228, 292
Currier, Raymond H., 38, 154
Curtis, Lt. Amos, 249
Curtis, Arthur E., 30, 69, 315
Curtis, Ernest A., 72
Curtis house, 73
Curtis, Israel, 67, 248
Curtis, John, 140, 214
Curtis, Ruth (Peabody), 214
Curtis, Thomas, 33, 42, 200
Cushing, Dr. Ernest W., 140
Cushing, Cardinal Richard J., 275

D

Damon, Frank C., 249
Daniels, Elizabeth, 285
Danvers water works, 310
David Stiles house, 99
DeCoursey, Rev. Charles, 277
Deer reeve, 241, 242
Denison, Maj. Daniel, 17, 20, 35, 55
Dodge, Jacob, 236
Dolan, Thomas F., 205
Donahue, Rev. Paul, 277
Donovan, Daniel J., 277
Donovan, Timothy, 308
Dorman, Hannah, 22
Dorman, Susannah, 163
Dorman, Timothy, 33
Dow, George Francis, 87
Dunham, Elijah, 247
Dalton, Dorothy, 200

E

Early, Willoughby P., 275
East School, 283
Eliot, Andrew, 185
Eliot, Francis, 25, 27, 40, 85, 140, 240
Eliot house, 25, 40

Eliot, Jerusha, 63, 140
Eliot, Thomas, 63, 64, 147, 240
Elliot, Experience, 20
Elliot, John, 29, 147, 279
Elliot, Roger, 108
Elliot, Sewall, 309
Elliot, Stephen, 258
Emerson, Benjamin F., 300
Emerson, Billy, 233
Emerson, Daniel, 162
Emerson, Darius, 61, 62
Emerson, Milton Jenkings, 62, 283
Emerson, Mrs. Sarah R., 300
Emerson, Stephen, 19, 300
Essex Institute, 54, 78, 121, 133
Essex Railroad, 38, 321
Estey, Jesse, 46
Estey, John, 20, 41, 50, 58, 178, 231, 233, 303
Estey, John, Jr., 50, 61, 244
Estey, Jonathan, 51, 226, 231, 233, 303
Estey, Sally, 178
Estey Tavern, 19, 233
Estey, William, 300
Estey, Mrs. Hannah A., 272
Esty, J. N., 313
Esty (Eastie), John, 58
Esty, Loren G., 313, 315
Esty, Willis W., 273
Evangelical Congregational Society, 262, 269
Everall (Averill), Bister, 251

F

Farnham, Mrs. Benjamin, 305
Farnum, Samuel, 192, 196
Farnum, Samuel, Jr., 196
Felch, Dr. Daniel, 20, 226, 239, 240
Fence viewers, 240, 241
Ferncroft Inn, 22
Field drivers, 243
Fire bell, 315
Fire Department, 313
First Universalist Society, 270
Fishways, 241
Fiske, Abigail, 259
Fletcher, Amos, 113
Fletcher, Caroline (Stiles), 297, 300, 312, 326
Fletcher, Lillian, 297
Fletcher, Sally (Gould), 113
Fletcher, Samuel A., 297 - 299
Flint, Abbie, 222
Flint, Addie, 222
Flint, Anna, 198, 218, 219, 222
Flint, Charles L., 297, 300
Flint, Elisha, 80
Flint, Fannie F., 220 - 223, 319
Flint, George B., 124 - 129, 272, 297, 308
Flint, Huldah (Putnam), 216
Flint, Jeremiah, s. John, 80, 81, 145, 198, 218, 219, 222, 233, 285, 290
Flint, John, 79, 80, 145, 146, 150, 216 - 220, 241, 258
Flint, John, s. Jeremiah, 131, 222
Flint, John, s. John, 80, 81, 146, 220
Flint, Lt. John, 222
Flint, Miranda, 222
Flint, Nelson F., 222, 223
Flint Public Library, 295, 297 - 301
Flint, Ruth, 145, 218, 219
Flint, Samuel, 42, 79, 86, 216, 218
Flint, Sarah, 222
Flint, Sewall, 61
Flint, Stephen, 42
Flint, Sylvanus, 125, 133 - 136, 220, 222, 319
Flint, Capt. Thomas, 38, 42, 79, 85, 86, 218
Flint, Thomas, s. Thomas, 79, 85, 86, 218
Flint, Timothy, 247
Flint, Mrs. Walter S., 283, 322
Floyd, Charles P., 253
Footbridge over Boston Brook, 45
Forney, Robert E., 211
Foster, Asa, 38
Foster, Moses, 156
Fowler, Jeremiah, 211
Francis, Charles ("Snow"), 149
Francis, Edmund, 149
Francis, Frank, 149
Francis, John, 149
Francis, Nancy, 149
Frye, Joseph, 75, 196
Fuller, Abigail Holten, 162

Fuller, Abijah, 45
Fuller, Amos, 165, 166
Fuller, Capt. Andrew, 111, 165, 170, 171, 173, 177, 197, 222, 227, 246, 247, 259
Fuller, Andrew, s. Andrew, 173
Fuller, Andrew, s. Benjamin, 177
Fuller, Col. Archelaus, 58, 108, 147, 175, 177, 178, 246, 248, 250, 280, 295
Fuller, Archelaus, s. Daniel, 179
Fuller, Benjamin, 38, 153, 175, 177, 178
Fuller, Benjamin, s. Archelaus, 178
Fuller, Benjamin, s. Benjamin, 147, 175, 177
Fuller, Betty, 173, 222
Fuller, Daniel, s. Archelaus, 162, 178, 179, 286, 295, 304
Fuller, Rev. Daniel, s. Benjamin, 177, 285
Fuller, Daniel, s. Jeremiah, 179
Fuller, Dr. David, 19, 161, 227, 244, 309
Fuller, David, s. Andrew, 98, 170
Fuller, Dean, 179, 304
Fuller, Dean, s. Daniel, 167
Fuller, Edward, 69, 71, 106, 159
Fuller, Elbridge, s. Daniel, 179
Fuller, Elisha, 18, 42, 58, 61, 159, 161, 249
Fuller, Elizabeth, diary of, 109, 110
Fuller, Ephraim, 162, 163, 166, 167, 197, 244
Fuller, Ezra, 161
Fuller, George, 300
Fuller, George W., 179
Fuller, Holten, 161
Fuller, Jacob, 20, 38, 42, 50, 55, 69, 71, 106, 108, 153, 159, 161, 227, 309
Fuller, Jacob, Jr., 159, 161
Fuller, Jeremiah, 179
Fuller, Jesse, 167
Fuller, John, s. Andrew, 41, 111, 170, 173, 174, 261, 281, 304
Fuller, John, s. Daniel, 179
Fuller, John, s. John, 170
Fuller, John s. Thomas, 153, 167, 226, 240, 246, 303
Fuller, Jonathan, 156, 240, 303
Fuller, Joseph, s. Joseph, 163, 247
Fuller, Joseph, s. Thomas, 2d., 38, 153, 156, 163, 240, 309
Fuller, Mary, d. Thomas 3d., 177
Fuller, Nancy, 234
Fuller, Nehemiah, 166
Fuller, Rachel, 163
Fuller, Ruth, 163
Fuller, Samuel, s. Benjamin, 175
Fuller, Samuel, s. Daniel, 179
Fuller, Simeon, 166, 167
Fuller, Sophronia, 179
Fuller, Thomas, 17, 18, 20, 25, 37, 41, 50, 55, 83, 91, 92, 153, 154, 167, 240
Fuller, Thomas, s. Daniel, 179
Fuller, Thomas, s. Joseph, 163
Fuller, Lt. Thomas (2d), 37, 38, 42, 50, 153, 154, 156, 226, 240, 245
Fuller, Thomas, 3d., 42, 55, 56, 156
Fuller, Timothy, 39, 50, 58, 87, 90, 143, 146, 156, 170, 226, 241, 244, 256
Fuller, Rev. Timothy, 109, 110, 161
Fuller, William, 50, 154, 156, 167, 226, 246
Furbish, Henry B., 136

G

Gage house, 65, 140
Gallagher, James H., 93
Gardner, Capt. Benjamin, 233, 248, 250, 251
Gates, Isaac, 149, 272, 304
Giddings, Zaccheus, 98
Gingell, Elizabeth, 223
Gingell, Hannah, 223
Gingell, John, 15 - 17, 38, 45, 180, 223
Goodale, Maj. Eben, 98
Goodhue, William, 158
Goodridge, Benjamin, 197, 198
Goodridge, Hepzibah, 197
Goss, Richard, 192
Gould, Amos, 246
Gould, Andrew, 90, 98, 181
Gould, Joseph Porter, 46, 68, 170
Gould, Lois, 191

Gould, Nathaniel, 116
Gould, Phebe, 33
Gould, Solomon, 116
Gray, William, 111
Great Meadow, 55 - 58
Green, Elizabeth, 58
Green, Rev. Joseph, 56, 146, 225
Grothe, J. J., 272, 313
Grothe, William H., 93

H

Hart, Albert Bushnell, 108
Haskell, W. O. & Son, 283
Hayward, Jesse, 66
Hearse house, 305
Hickey, Edward, J., 136
Hobbs, Abigail, 23
Hobbs, Deliverance, 23
Hobbs, Lt. Joseph, 258, 283
Hobbs, William, 22, 23
Hobbs, William, gr-s. William, 22
Hog reeves, 240
Holbrook, George G., 315
Holt, Job, 246
Holten, Abigail, 159
Hood, Rev. J. Augustine, 153
Hooper, Henry L., 266
How, Asa, 184, 244, 97, 98
How, Capt. John, 30, 85, 86
How, John, s. Capt. John, 30, 85, 240
How, Sarah, 200
Howe, Annie, 174
Howe, Asa, 233
Howe, Benjamin, 174, 321
Howe, Erskine, 33
Howe, Frederick, 98
Howe, Galen, 174, 175
Howe, Mark, 33
Howe, Nellie, 174, 175
Howe Station, 320
Hoyt, Capt. Timothy, 318
Hubbard, Rev. Ebenezer, 173, 174, 261, 262, 295
Hutchinson, Augustus P., 322
Hutchinson, Benjamin, 38
Hutchinson, Elizabeth, 64
Hutchinson, E. P., 292, 293
Hutchinson, Israel, 246
Hutchinson, Joseph, 45
Hutchinson, William H., 137, 322

I

Illingworth, Ralph H., 67, 211, 216
"Indian bridge", 35, 189
Ingalls, Elias T., 118, 297, 300
Ingalls, Enoch, 94, 158
Ingalls, Francis, 196
Ingalls, John James, 118, 300
Ingalls, Moody, 94, 95, 158
Ingalls, Sally, 158
Ingalls, Theodore, 93, 94, 98, 112, 158
Ireland, Elizabeth, 19, 223
Ireland, John, 19, 223
Ireland, William, 17, 223
Ironworks, 83 *et seq.*
Ironworks brook, 85
Ives, John M., 211

J

Jefferds, Rev. Forrest, 262, 263 - 265
Jefferson, Nelson E., 137
Jefferson, Perry Madison, 137
Jenkins, Capt. David, 280
Jenks, Samuel, 86
Jewett, Mrs. Priscilla, 189
Johnson, Rev. A. H., 266
Johnson, Oscar V., 275
Jopp, Charles, 209, 211
Joseph Frye house, 75, 196
Jury box, 242, 243

K

Kenney, Archelaus, 42, 247
Kenney, Asa, 27, 89, 90, 92, 97
Kenney, Daniel, 27, 29, 69, 86, 88, 240, 246, 303
Kenney, David, 45
Kenney house, 27, 28, 88
Kenney, Isaac, 88 - 90, 92, 208, 249
Kenney, Israel, 88, 92, 93, 249
Kenney, Jonathan, 27, 69, 106
Kenney, Simeon, 27, 89, 90, 92
Kenny, Johnson, 97, 98
Kenny, Thomas, 146

Kimball, Abigail Fuller, 18, 19, 149, 162
Kimball, Betty, 149
Kimball, Gilman A., 142
Kimball, Thomas, 98
Kitchin, Ira, 253
Knife factory, 139
Knight, Abigail, 23
Knight, Allen, 98
Knight, Benjamin, 24, 214
Knight, Elizabeth, 24
Knight, Enos, 116, 191
Knight, Jonathan, 92, 191, 208
Knight, Joseph, 24, 63, 116, 240
Knight, Margaret, 206
Knight, Philip, 16, 23, 24, 29, 69, 187
Knight, Philip, Jr., 23
Knight, Rebecca, 24, 30, 190

L

Lacy, Lawrence, 200
Lake, Silas, 93
Lake, Thomas, 93
Lambert, Eunice, 107
Lambert, Joseph, 107
Lambert, Mary, 107
Lambert, Patience, 107
Lambert (Lombard), Samuel, 106, 107
Lambert, Sarah, 107
Lamon (Lemon), Eunice, 46
Lamon (Lemon), John, 58, 59, 241
Lamon (Lemon), Lt. Jonathan, 249
Lamon, Winthrop, 113
Langille, Charles D., 309
Leary, Edward H., 319
Lee, James J., 253
Lee, Mrs. Mary, 319
Leonards, 83, 91
Lever, William, 292
Library, first social, 295
Linn, James, 228
Little, Francis, 105
Littlefield, Mary, 175
Log bridge, 35, 37, 43
Long causeway, 38, 39
Longley, John, 16

M

Mackentire, Benjamin, 20
Mackentire, Philip, 20
Mackentire, Phineas, 20
Mackentire, Samuel, 20
Mackentire, Simeon, 137
Mackentire, Timothy, 247
Martin, Benjamin F., 132
Martin, James H., 253
Martin, John, 163, 200
Martin, Matthew, 246, 247
Martin, William T., 139
Masse, Chester K., 223, 227, 229
McCarty, John, 78, 111
McCarty, Peter, 78, 111
McGlauflin, Benjamin T., 229, 313
McGlauflin, Samuel, 142, 272
McIntire, Abraham, 229
McManus, Henry P., 142
Meagher, Mrs. Mary, 319
Meriam, Abigail, 178
Meriam house, 52, 53
Meriam, Lydia, 53, 209
Meriam, Dr. Silas, 18, 53, 54, 156, 209, 251, 286, 295, 297
Merriam, Andrew, 98, 304
Merriam, F. P. & Co., 121, 304
Merriam, Francis P., 121, 266, 273, 322
Merriam, James N., 266, 290, 310
Merriam, William A., 121
Merritt Electric Co., 313
Metcalf, John C., 138
Methodist Church, 273
Middleton - Beverly highway, 41, 42
Middleton Congregational Church, 255 - 273
Miles, Sarah, 187
Mill path, 25, 40
Munday bridge, 45
Murray, Albert C., 75
Muzichuk, John, 75

N

Narragansett fight, 245
Newburyport Turnpike, 39
Nichols, Benjamin, 63 - 65, 89, 140
Nichols brook, 22
Nichols, Ebenezer, 240

Nichols, Edward, 62, 63, 89, 303
Nichols, Elisha, 183
Nichols, Elizabeth (Hutchinson), 64
Nichols, Dr. Ezra, 158, 162, 244
Nichols, Hannah, 22, 63
Nichols, John, 22, 62, 63, 187
Nichols, John, Jr., 25
Nichols, John, s. Samuel, 65, 66
Nichols, Joseph, 63, 68, 248
Nichols, Mary, 22
Nichols, Deac. Samuel, 216, 243, 258, 292
Nichols, Samuel, ae. 16, 247
Nichols, Stephen, 63, 64, 66, 67
Nichols, Stephen, Jr., 64 - 66, 97
Nichols, Thomas, 25, 27
Nichols, William, 22, 62
North School, 281
North Shore Community Center, 216
Nourse, Rebecca, 106
Noyes, Alpheus P., 138, 139
Noyes, Harriet C., 138

O

Oakdale Station, 322
Old South Main Street, 154
Osborn, Mrs. John, 211
Osborne, Richard, 19
Osgood, Primus, 251
Ossoli, Margaret Fuller, 109
Ox sling, 97

P

Papermaking, 132 - 134
"parting paths", 41
Peabody, Andrew, s. Zerubabel, 71, 72, 97, 184
Peabody, Ann, 198
Peabody, Col. Benjamin, 53, 54, 93, 96, 97, 116, 183, 185, 206 - 210, 214, 215, 248, 249, 259, 281
Peabody, Bethiah, 25
Peabody, Bimsley, 246
Peabody, Cornet Francis, 187, 206, 208, 213
Peabody, Daniel, 292, 293
Peabody, David, 72, 74
Peabody, Dean, 198
Peabody, Deac. Francis, 39, 93, 112, 147, 183, 185, 206, 213 - 215, 240
Peabody, Francis (of Salem), 81, 131, 132, 222, 266
Peabody, Francis, s. Deac. Francis, 66, 67, 97, 98, 139, 186, 215, 216
Peabody, Francis, 3d, 69, 216
Peabody, George (of Salem), 192, 266
Peabody, Hannah, d. Joseph, 25
Peabody, Isaac, 206, 211, 246, 247
Peabody, Jesse W., 74
Peabody, John, 194
Peabody, John M., 297, 310
Peabody, Joseph, 25
Peabody, Joseph (of Salem), 131, 192, 214, 259, 308
Peabody, Joseph, s. Joseph, 25, 71, 72, 74
Peabody, Joseph, s. Nathaniel, 71, 72
Peabody, Joseph 2d, s. Zerubabel, 72, 97, 198, 222
Peabody, Lucy, 191
Peabody, Mary, d. Joseph, 25
Peabody mill bridge, 71
Peabody, Capt. Nathaniel, 25, 65, 66, 71, 72, 309
Peabody, Oren, 211
Peabody, Rebecca, d. Joseph, 25
Peabody, Roger, 285
Peabody, Samuel, s. Francis, 215, 216
Peabody, Samuel, s. Joseph, 71
Peabody, Samuel, s. Joseph 3d, 198, 310
Peabody, Samuel, s. Thomas, 72
Peabody, Sarah, 76, 147
Peabody, Stephen, 67, 68, 139, 215, 216
Peabody Street bridge, 45
Peabody, Susan C., 272
Peabody, Thomas, s. Nathaniel, 71, 72
Peabody, William, 208
Peabody, Zerubabel, 25, 43, 71, 181, 258
Peart, Jane, 27
Perkins, Dorothy, 206
Perkins, Mrs. Elizabeth, 309

Perkins, Hannah, 194, 197
Perkins, Hepzibah (Goodridge), 197
Perkins, John, 192
Perkins, Jonathan, 194, 197
Perkins, Joseph Berry, 211
Perkins, Lydia, 194
Perkins, Moses, 98
Perkins, Olive Berry, 174
Perkins, Oliver, 98
Perkins, Phebe, 194
Perkins, Sarah, 194
Perkins, Timothy (of Topsfield), 192, 194
Perkins, Timothy, s. Capt. Timothy, 148, 194 - 197, 199
Perkins, Timothy, Jr., 76, 194, 196, 197
Perley, Sidney, 40, 49, 187
Perry, James O., 138
Peters, Rev. Andrew, 107, 146, 197, 226, 246, 256, 309
Peters, Ann, 146
Peters, Bimsley, 227
Peters, Hannah, 197, 226
Peters, Peter, 146
Peters, Phebe, 197
Peters, William, 227
Pfeffer, Thomas S., 75
Phelps, Ann (Peabody), 198
Phelps, Carrie, 124 - 129
Phelps, Charles, 308
Phelps, Dr. Ebenezer S., 124, 297
Phelps, Elizabeth, 79
Phelps, Horace, 126, 283, 308
Phelps, John, 78, 111
Phelps, Nathaniel, 19, 80
Phelps, Reuel, 124
Phelps, William A., 266, 268, 283, 310
Phelps's Corner, 42
Philbrick, J. D., 290
Pike, Eunice L., 179
Pike, William, 137
Porter, John S., 75
Post Offices, 315
Potter, E. P., 137
Powder house, 304
Powers, Rev. John H., 275
Preston, David, 97
Preston, John, 98
Price's meadow, 159, 175
Primus Emanuel, 251
Prince, Capt. Asa, 183
Pritchard's dam, 45
Putnam, Adrian, 75
Putnam, Betty (Dale), 177
Putnam, Calvin, 61, 62
Putnam, Ebenezer, 92, 97
Putnam, Edward, Jr., 18, 35, 85 - 89, 92, 116, 187, 189, 240, 241
Putnam, Deac. Edward, Sr., 77, 85 - 89, 187, 189
Putnam, Eleazer, 59
Putnam, Elisha, 187, 206
Putnam, Ezra, 35, 50, 88, 166, 189, 249, 250
Putnam, Huldah, 216
Putnam, Jethro, 216
Putnam, John, 20, 23, 37
Putnam, Mrs. Martha (Nurse), 189
Putnam, Mary, d. Ezra, 166
Putnam, Mary (Wilkins), 189, 190
Putnam, Miles, 189 - 191
Putnam, Moses, 116
Putnam, Nathaniel, 16, 37
Putnam, Sarah, 189
Putnam, Thomas, 22, 77
Putnam, Timothy, 106

Q

Quiner's Corner, 46
Quinlan, Rev. John J., 275

R

Reed, Jonathan, 211
Revolutionary War - names of men who served, 249 - 251
Revolutionary War - negroes who served, 251
Richards, Mary, 27
Richardson, Ann Jane, 174
Richardson, Benjamin P., 162
Richardson, Bethiah, 18
Richardson, Daniel, 174, 297, 305 ,309
Richardson, Rev. Daniel Warren, 174
Richardson, David, 225, 226

Richardson, Hannah, 177
Richardson, Hazen K., 159, 162, 235, 266
Richardson, Hazen M., 33
Richardson, Helen, 159, 232, 235, 286
Richardson, Rev. Henry Jackson, 174
Richardson, Jasper, 228, 229
Richardson, Jeremiah, 228, 286
Richardson, John, 93, 98
Richardson, Lillian, 159, 232, 235, 286
Richardson, Olive Maria, 174
Richardson, Ruth, 154
Richardson, Solomon, 147, 251, 305
Richardson, Stephen, 98, 112, 285
Richardson, William Q., 292
Richardson, William W., 253
Robinson, John, 22
Robinson, Thomas, 22, 187, 240
Rocky Hill meetinghouse, 259
Rogers, C. A., 312
Ross, Walter, 246
Ruck, John, 23
Russell, David, 116
Russell, James, 98
Ryder, George H., 268

S

Salem Village, 1 *et seq.*
Salem Village church, 255
Sanford, John B., 192
Sargent, Bailey, 315
Sawmill bridge, 43
Sawmill chips, 68
Sawyer, Henry, 33, 76, 140, 309
Scipio, 251
Semons, J. H., 322
Shelden, Ephraim, 27, 29
Shelden, Rebecca, 27
Shingles, cedar, 16
Shoemakers' tools, 115 - 118
Sibley, William, 38
Skidmore, Richard, 246, 247
Small, Samuel, 186
Small, Thomas, 37
Smith, Aaron, 247
Smith, Caroline (Fuller), 300
Smith, Rev. Elias, 111, 146, 147, 153, 154, 214, 215, 249, 250, 256 - 259, 295, 308
Smith, Elizabeth, 214
Smith, George W., 74, 180
Smith, James, 38
Smith, Joseph N., 300
Smith, Katharine, 214
Smith, Samuel, 192, 196
Smith, Sarah, 156
Snow, Mrs. Louise, 319
Soapmaking, 136
Souhegan West (Amherst, N. H.), 22
South Andover, 41
South Middleton School, 290
Southwick, Lewis, 139
Spanish - American War - names of men who served, 253
Spence, John, 247
St. Agnes Parish, 275
Staves, barrel, 16
Stearns, Samuel, 166
Steel, Joseph, 87, 88
Steel, Sarah (Putnam), 87
Stevens, Nathan, 194
Stiles, Aaron, 203
Stiles, Abner, 246
Stiles, Andrew, 203
Stiles, Asa, 249
Stiles, Caroline, 204, 321
Stiles, Clinton P., 98 - 102
Stiles, Daniel, 202
Stiles, Deac. David, 98, 203 - 205, 262
Stiles, David, Jr., 93, 96 - 102, 145, 202, 263, 266, 269, 270, 297, 305
Stiles, Ebenezer, 192, 202
Stiles, Ebenezer, s. Ebenezer, 200, 202
Stiles, Elbridge, 45
Stiles, Ezekiel, 202, 205
Stiles, Farnham, 129, 204, 292
Stiles, Franklin Osgood, 204
Stiles, Hannah, 203
Stiles, Hiram, 126, 198, 204
Stiles, John, 18, 309
Stiles, Miriam (Richardson), 203
Stiles, Nancy (Farnham), 203, 204
Stiles, Phineas, 203
Stiles, Mrs. Ruth Russell (Berry), 205
Stiles, Simeon, 203

Stiles, Sumner B., 205
Stocks, 304
Storrow, James J., 76, 199, 309
Street Railway, 322 - 328
Surveyor of flax, 241
Swan Pond, 312
Symonds house, 32
Symonds, John, 77
Symonds, Joseph, 74, 76, 246
Symonds, Joseph, s. Joseph, 76
Symonds, Mary, 25, 71
Symonds, Deac. Samuel, 42, 194, 257
Symonds, Samuel, Jr., 33, 43
Symonds, Samuel, Sr., 25, 77, 240
Symonds, Samuel, s. Joseph, 69, 76, 77
Symonds, William, 59

T

Tanning, 115, 185
Tapley, Gilbert, 68
Tapley, Perley, 68
Ten Load Meadow brook, 58, 59
Theriault (Terrio), Cyril, 167
Thomas, Jethro, 247
Thomas, Josiah B., 140, 142
Thomas, Richard, 42, 107
Thunder Bridge, 43
Town charter, 239
Town hall, 305
Town meeting, first, 239 - 241
Town, Nathaniel, 240, 279
Town pounds, 303
Town, Rebecca, 24
Town, Solomon, 247
Towne, Benjamin, 211
Towne, Daniel, 206, 211
Towne, Elizabeth, 30, 180
Towne, George, 49
Towne, Jacob, Jr., 77
Towne, John, 77
Towne, Joseph, 67, 68, 76, 206, 211
Towne, Lorenzo, 76
"Tramp house", 306
Tufts, Gustavus H., 179, 198, 199, 309
Tufts, Myra, 179
Tufts, Nancy Emeline (Stiles), 198
Tufts, Wilbur H., 199
Tyler, Ansel P., 266, 268
Tyler, Mrs. A. P., 269
Tyler, Frank, 102
Tyler, Maurice E., 239, 310, 322
Tything man, 240, 241

U

Upton, Miss Betsey, 268
Upton, Elisha, 246
Upton, Ezekiel, 78, 111
Upton, Jeremiah, 97
Upton, Jerusha, 161
Upton, John, 78, 79, 259

V

Van Iderstein, Harry, 253

W

Walcot, Jonathan, 38
Walker, Abel B., 137, 138
Walker, Shuball, 55
Walsh, Rev. Frederick, 277
Watkins, Charles Hadley, 171
Way, Aaron, 19, 20, 55, 231
Way, Aaron, Sr., 17, 19, 50, 51
Way house, 19, 231
Way, William, 19, 20, 25, 223
Webb, George, 93
Weed, Daniel, Jr., 158
Wheatland, Henry, 78, 133
Whipple, Joseph, 71
White, Henry F., 273
White, Isaiah, 20
White, Joseph, 20
White, Oliver, 119
White, Samuel, 20
Whitford, William, 98
Wilds, Moses, 233
Wilkins, Abner, 180
Wilkins, Adrian, 74, 75, 187
Wilkins & Merriam, 118, 120
Wilkins, Anna, 51
Wilkins, Aquilla, 56, 246, 248
Wilkins, Asa, 18
Wilkins, Asaph, 246
Wilkins, Benjamin, s. Bray, 17-19, 59, 223, 240
Wilkins, Bray, 15-17, 19, 20, 29, 37, 42, 49, 71, 83, 91, 180, 223

Wilkins, Bray, early house site, 17-19
Wilkins, Bray, s. Thomas, 30, 180, 246
Wilkins, Caroline, 211
Wilkins, Caroline E. (Gould), 192
Wilkins, Charles E., 40
Wilkins, Cyrus K., 46, 192
Wilkins, Daniel, 56, 59, 229
Wilkins, Daniel, Jr., 62, 183, 246
Wilkins, David, 17, 59
Wilkins, David, Jr., 59, 226
Wilkins, David S., 42, 216, 262
Wilkins, E. B., 268
Wilkins, Ebenezer, 58
Wilkins, Edward W., 74, 75, 187, 269
Wilkins, Maj. Elias, 93
Wilkins, Lt. Elijah, 97, 98, 183 - 186, 248, 249
Wilkins, Elijah, s. Elijah, 115, 116, 191, 192
Wilkins, Mrs. Elizabeth ("Betty"), 283
Wilkins, Enos, 248
Wilkins, George Payson, 216, 292
Wilkins, George Putnam, 216
Wilkins, Henry, 17, 19, 29, 58, 181, 183, 223
Wilkins, Henry A., 322
Wilkins, Henry, Jr., 226
Wilkins, Hezekiah, 107, 147
Wilkins, Ichabod, 30, 180 - 184
Wilkins, Isaac, 42, 51, 156, 226, 229, 231, 240, 241, 303
Wilkins, Israel, 71, 180, 181
Wilkins, Israel, Jr., 247
Wilkins, Ithacar, 180
Wilkins, James, 74, 186, 210
Wilkins, John, 16, 19, 180, 223
Wilkins, John, Jr., 17, 56, 147
Wilkins, Jonathan, s. Benj., 18, 50, 58, 147, 258
Wilkins, Jonathan 3d, 18
Wilkins, Joseph, 240
Wilkins, Joshua, 180, 227
Wilkins, Lydia, 51
Wilkins, Lyman Smith, 216
Wilkins, Margaret, 23
Wilkins, Mary W. Elijah, 183 - 186, 189
Wilkins, Nehemiah, 97, 98, 181, 183
Wilkins, Peggy (Peabody), 210, 211
Wilkins, Phineas, 180 - 183, 246
Wilkins, Rebecca, 20
Wilkins, Samuel, 17, 30, 111, 158, 279
Wilkins, Capt. Samuel, 30, 42, 149, 183, 184, 186
Wilkins, Samuel Howe, 29, 30, 46, 297
Wilkins, Sarah (Fuller), 158
Wilkins, Solomon, 42, 45, 51, 76, 107, 158, 226, 231, 286
Wilkins, Stephen, 107, 192, 246
Wilkins, Mrs. Susie E., 269
Wilkins, Thomas, s. Bray, 17, 22, 29, 30, 38, 180, 186
Wilkins, Thomas, s. Thomas, 30, 180, 186, 241
Willard, John, 29, 309
Will's Hill, 1
Winslow, George W., 93
Witham, Mrs. Frank A., 211
Wooden, John, 159
Woodman Bros. & Ross, 62
Woodward, Bertha (Flint), 79, 216, 220 - 223, 309
Woodward, Carol E., 79, 216
Woodward, Harry R., 79, 216
World War I Memorial, 253
Wright, Emma, 137
Wright, Joshua, 92, 246

Y

Young, Stephen, 247
Young, William, 319

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3 6234 00043579 5